

COMHAIRLE CONTAE LÚ

LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL



BUISÉAD BLIANTÚIL A GLACADH

2014

ADOPTED ANNUAL BUDGET 2014



Annual Budget 2014

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COMHAIRLE CONTAE LÚ

Oifigí an Chontae
Dún Dealgan

9 Nollaig 2013

**Chuig: CATHAOIRLEACH agus gach ball
den Comhairle Contae Lú**

***Re: Budget for the year 1st January 2014 to
31st December 2014***

County Manager's Report **Annual Revenue Budget 2014**

Introduction

The Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government has determined the period 24th November 2013 to 13th January 2014 as the prescribed period for the County Councils to hold their 2014 Budget meeting. Louth County Council will hold its statutory budget meeting on the 16th of December 2013 and as the budget must be adopted within 21 days commencing on that date, the final date for the adoption of the Budget is the 5th of January 2014. The draft budget has been prepared in the format prescribed by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

Corporate Policy Group

The Corporate Policy Group discussed the Draft Budget at meetings held on the 26th November and on the 6th of December 2013.

The 2014 Budget

The Draft Budget for the year to 31st December 2014 provides for expenditure totalling €67.76m and income of €49.99m. The balance of €17.77m is funded from a combination of the County Demand, the Local Government Fund, the Pension Related Deductions from staff remunerations and Commercial Rates. The 2014 County Demand is €1.65m, the Pension Related Deductions is €0.9m, the estimated Local Government Fund is €7.13m. The balance of €8.09m will be levied on the 2014 Commercial Rates using an annual rate of valuation of 55.36 an increase of 0.5% on the 2013 rate.

The Draft Budget for 2014 is the sixth year of contracting resources for the Council and again it is proving more difficult to balance successive budgets without having a real impact on services and this year again, it has unfortunately been necessary to impact budgets in some essential service areas. I can assure you, however, that every effort continues to be made by staff to support the ongoing development of the Louth economy.

Estimated Outturn 2013

The financial budget has been closely monitored during 2013 to ensure that the council remains within budget. Expenditure remains broadly in line for 2013 but adjustments have been made to take account of income received under the various headings during the year. The 2013 budget is anticipated to be fully funded from 2013 income sources and the provision for credit balance as set out in the adopted 2013 budget which will ensure that the Council does not incur a deficit for the year.

Local Government Fund

The Local Government Fund General Purpose Grant for local authorities in 2014 is to be calculated in a different format to take account of the introduction of Irish Water and the Property Tax yield. In previous years the Local Government Fund was made up of income from Motor Tax receipts and an allocation from the Exchequer. In 2014 the fund will comprise of income from the New Property Tax and will be adjusted for the Water net cost as this will be recoupable from Irish Water in 2014. It is expected that the NPPR (Non Principal Private Residence) previous income will also be reflected in the Fund allocation.

The County will receive the payment for the four authorities and it will be distributed to the town councils by an adjustment to their County Demand charge. The County has not yet received confirmation of its actual allocation for 2014 on going to print and it has therefore been estimated that the amount will be €7.13m a reduction of 21% on the 2013 allocation which takes account of the separate funding to be received from Irish Water.

Property Tax

The property tax was introduced in 2013 and replaces the Household Charge. The funding from this tax is the basis of funding for local authorities into the future. The Property Tax replaced the flat rate Household Charge of €100, which had been introduced by the government in 2011. Whereas the Local Authority was responsible for the collection of the Household Charge the collection of the Property Tax has been assigned to the Revenue Commissioners. The income collected is paid into Central Government and will be allocated on an annual basis to each local authority.

Under the new legislation from 2015 the Council Members will have the power to amend the rate of the multiplier to be charged within the county. The valuation of each property will be determined in line with legislation by the Revenue who will also be responsible for the collection of amounts due.

Non Principal Private Residence (NPPR) Charge

It is proposed in the Finance Bill 2013, which is currently going through the Dail, that the annual €200 charge for the Non Principal Private Residence will cease as and from the end of 2013. This means that the charge which was introduced by the Local Government (Charges) Act 2009 and collected on a shared services basis by the NPPR Bureau on behalf of all the local authorities will cease in 2013 but the local authorities will continue to follow up on amounts outstanding. Penalties have accrued on property owners who have not paid the charge to date and the charge and penalties will remain collectable in the coming years.

Commercial Rates

The provision in the 2014 budget for Commercial rates is €8.09m and is based on an increase of 0.05% in the annual rate in valuation from 55.08 to 55.36 offset by a reduction in the net effective valuation for the county from 146,393 to 146,151. Louth County Council currently has the third lowest annual rate in valuation of all County Councils. This rate has been held since 2010 but as other sources of income are reducing year on year e.g. the closure of the landfill, the reduction in the local government fund it has resulted in the need to raise the charge on rates in 2014 reflecting the growing dependency on income from commercial rates to fund the Council.

Under the Local Government Bill 2013 it is proposed that following the unification of the Councils in 2014 the budget for 2015 will see the beginning of a realignment of the rates within the County to bring all rates within the County and Urban areas in line. To achieve this a "Base Rate" will be set by the Council for the **2015** budget and a Base Year Adjustment shall be set. The local authority will have a limited period to bring their rates

to the agreed base year which shall not be greater than 10 years commencing with Year 1 (2015) and will not be able to amend the base year rate until all rates are aligned.

Louth Local Authorities have already begun the process of bringing our rates in line over the last number of years with the County rate being held at 55.08 since 2010 and the rates in Dundalk Town Council and Drogheda Borough Council's being brought into line with each other and reductions applied year on year.

Local Government Reform

While we continue to rise to the challenges of working through the current economic downturn in 2014 Local Authorities are also faced with the single most significant change of local government in its history. Not only is 2014 a local election year but in June Louth we will see the amalgamation of the four authorities, the County Council, Drogheda Borough Council, Dundalk Town Council and Ardee Town Council resulting in one combined Council for the County.

There will be an increase in the representation on the County Council of three council members and the new members of the County Council will also represent their areas on the new Municipal Districts which will be established under the Local Government Bill 2013 currently being debated in the Dail.

A Transition Office has been set up in the Council to ensure that the work which commenced in the last number of years in aligning services and processes is developed into a full Transition Plan. It provides the opportunity to produce efficiencies in services thereby increasing resources as well as capitalising on IT developments which will support services. There will be no loss of focus on the large urban areas of the County and there will be high quality Customer Service Centres in key population areas.

Irish Water

On 1st of January 2014 water services will transfer to the new Irish Water company who will become the water authority for Ireland. This does not mean that the local authority will cease operating in the area of water but that actually we will continue to operate the service under a service level agreement with Irish Water for a number of years to ensure the continued safe and efficient supply of water services to the public.

In 2013 we have worked closely with Irish Water to develop a transition plan to ensure that the high quality service that the local authority has delivered to the public will continue and that the transfer over will be a seamless process.

LEO Offices

In 2014 we will see the Local Enterprise Boards join the County Councils to combine with Business Support units under the new title of Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs). The Council has worked with the Local Enterprise Board over the years to develop opportunities for budding businesses in the County and we see this move as a positive strengthening of the resources available to business and budding Entrepreneurs within the County and look forward to welcoming the staff of the Local Enterprise Boards to the County Council

Local Community Development Committees

In 2014 the County Development Board will cease and a Local Community Development Committee will be established under the Alignment Process which is set out in the Local Government Bill. This will see strong partnerships enabling focussed community planning and ensuring that resources are maximised and efficiencies capitalised upon.

Louth Local Authorities will, in 2014, produce a digital strategy which will ensure that systems are put in place to support services. This will include a new Customer Relations Management System which will enable queries to be tracked and quality monitored. There will also be a specific system for the Elected Members developed ensuring that representations are dealt with efficiently, their progress tracked and timely information made available to the Members. Work is concluding on the testing of a new Council Meeting Administration System which will be made available to the Members and enable Council business to be submitted on-line and histories searched as well as a faster access to the Members.

Conclusion

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Cathaoirleach Declan Breathnach and the Members of the Council for their co-operation and support to me since I took up office in August. I wish to also acknowledge the previous Cathaoirleach Councillor Finian McCoy. I want to thank the Members of the Corporate Policy Group for their co-operation and assistance in formulating the Budget. I look forward to a solid working partnership with the Members in 2014 to deliver a high quality public service to the people of Louth.

I wish to acknowledge the ongoing commitment of the staff of the Council who have strived to continue to provide a superior public service through very difficult and challenging times. I want to thank the Management Team for their unwavering commitment throughout this time of significant change and for their dedication to ensuring a well managed and relevant service is delivered and in particular I wish to acknowledge and commend the work carried out by Joan Martin as Acting Manager up to my appointment.

The preparation of an Annual Budget is always a difficult process but production of a budget in the current economic climate is a very demanding task and I would like to express my appreciation to all of the Management Team and staff who worked with me on the preparation of this budget in particular Ms Bernie Woods, Head of Finance and her Team.

Finally I would like to recommend the adoption of the Annual Budget for 2014 as presented to council and the approval of the Annual Rate on Valuation of 55.36.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Poole', is written over a horizontal line.

Philomena Poole
County Manager

TABLES

TABLE A - CALCULATION OF ANNUAL RATE ON VALUATION						
Summary by Service Division	Summary per Table A 2014					
	Expenditure	Income	Budget Net Expenditure 2014		Estimated Net Expenditure Outturn 2013 (as restated)	
	€	€	€	%	€	%
Gross Revenue Expenditure & Income						
Housing and Building	8,218,369	8,254,839	-36,470	0%	254,389	1%
Road Transport & Safety	10,621,073	6,887,595	3,733,478	20%	4,406,908	20%
Water Services	18,978,159	18,680,378	297,781	2%	4,033,334	18%
Development Management	7,214,436	3,728,202	3,486,234	19%	3,347,371	15%
Environmental Services	10,578,126	6,652,553	3,925,573	21%	3,923,079	18%
Recreation and Amenity	3,376,684	447,643	2,929,041	16%	2,964,613	14%
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	3,802,212	2,961,363	840,849	5%	797,955	4%
Miscellaneous Services	5,805,780	2,376,324	3,429,456	18%	2,197,734	10%
	68,594,839	49,988,897	18,605,942	100%	21,925,383	100%
+ County Charge	0					
- County Charge		1,371,170	1,371,170			
Provision for Debit Balance	0		0			
Adjusted Gross Expenditure & Income (A)	68,594,839	51,360,067	17,234,772		21,925,383	
Financed by Other Income/Credit Balances						
Provision for Credit Balance		0	0			
Local Government Fund /General Purpose Grant		8,243,835	8,243,835			
Pension Related Deduction		900,000	900,000			
Sub - Total (B)			9,143,835		21,925,383	
Amount of Rates to be Levied C=(A-B)			8,090,937			
Net Effective Valuation D			146,151			
General Annual Rate on Valuation C/D			55.36			

Table B Expenditure & Income for 2014 and Estimated Outturn for 2013									
Division & Services		2014				2013			
		Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager
Code		€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
A01	Maintenance/Improvement of LA Housing Units	1,785,536	1,785,536	746,118	746,118	1,489,069	1,773,501	541,988	622,429
A02	Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer	316,079	316,079	13,433	13,433	370,808	419,443	12,147	13,539
A03	Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration	170,229	170,229	2,656,381	2,656,381	213,606	210,506	2,605,880	2,557,106
A04	Housing Community Development Support	292,494	292,494	24,732	24,732	223,924	212,637	6,088	6,786
A05	Administration of Homeless Service	1,268,886	1,268,886	1,075,294	1,075,294	1,030,069	1,144,476	917,500	875,359
A06	Support to Housing Capital Prog.	235,159	235,159	20,140	20,140	182,237	186,577	19,648	20,181
A07	RAS Programme	1,297,780	1,297,780	1,377,780	1,377,780	1,044,640	1,205,568	1,044,000	1,254,959
A08	Housing Loans	957,555	957,555	739,801	739,801	804,883	746,022	435,985	508,836
A09	Housing Grants	1,890,651	1,823,151	1,601,161	1,601,161	1,845,699	1,793,481	1,635,476	1,587,218
A11	Agency & Recoupable Services	4,000	4,000	0	0	6,106	13,216	50,000	4,625
	Service Division Total	8,218,369	8,150,869	8,254,840	8,254,840	7,211,041	7,705,427	7,268,712	7,451,038
B01	NP Road - Maintenance and Improvement	549,664	549,664	385,711	385,711	624,474	676,129	413,930	386,165
B02	NS Road - Maintenance and Improvement	277,498	277,498	115,789	115,789	448,332	313,498	216,900	55,807
B03	Regional Road - Maintenance and Improvement	2,321,759	2,321,759	1,813,454	1,813,454	2,491,260	2,385,239	1,417,539	1,966,578
B04	Local Road - Maintenance and Improvement	5,019,621	4,952,121	3,879,326	3,879,326	4,327,378	5,253,176	1,960,691	3,583,186
B05	Public Lighting	755,706	755,706	92,712	92,712	658,918	766,276	118,453	103,002
B06	Traffic Management Improvement	87,328	87,328	2,277	2,277	106,207	89,079	2,059	2,295
B07	Road Safety Engineering Improvement	435,387	435,387	219,316	219,316	472,462	428,219	257,746	219,384
B08	Road Safety Promotion/Education	69,183	69,183	2,382	2,382	78,429	69,020	2,154	4,308
B09	Car Parking	133,477	133,477	36,404	36,404	201,313	244,527	182,366	153,408
B10	Support to Roads Capital Prog.	209,575	209,575	8,609	8,609	234,094	229,677	7,785	8,647
B11	Agency & Recoupable Services	761,875	761,875	331,613	331,613	510,225	784,844	143,494	349,996
	Service Division Total	10,621,073	10,553,573	6,887,593	6,887,593	10,153,092	11,239,684	4,723,117	6,832,776

Table B Expenditure & Income for 2014 and Estimated Outturn for 2013									
Division & Services		2014				2013			
		Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
Code		€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Water Services									
C01	Water Supply	7,860,600	7,860,600	8,498,215	8,498,215	5,934,645	5,827,646	4,372,010	4,378,538
C02	Waste Water Treatment	8,953,053	8,953,053	8,665,086	8,665,086	7,263,282	7,246,235	5,889,105	5,839,038
C03	Collection of Water and Waste Water Charges	526,863	526,863	380,113	380,113	527,725	519,562	16,829	18,757
C04	Public Conveniences	230,420	230,420	7,955	7,955	229,575	226,808	7,194	8,018
C05	Admin of Group and Private Installations	110,393	110,393	34,895	34,895	114,960	112,890	104,420	104,927
C06	Support to Water Capital Programme	814,435	814,435	730,868	730,868	362,329	357,523	48,391	49,582
C07	Agency & Recoupable Services	482,395	482,395	363,245	363,245	6,231	141,560	25,026	30
Service Division Total		18,978,159	18,978,159	18,680,377	18,680,377	14,438,747	14,432,224	10,462,975	10,398,890
Development Management									
D01	Forward Planning	897,606	897,606	540,922	540,922	951,622	882,957	418,019	446,889
D02	Development Management	1,558,480	1,558,480	531,702	531,702	1,128,084	1,045,076	287,772	201,344
D03	Enforcement	532,056	532,056	124,780	124,780	522,020	513,211	197,810	51,159
D04	Industrial and Commercial Facilities	41,830	41,830	0	0	119,789	119,800	0	0
D05	Tourism Development and Promotion	165,748	165,748	9,080	9,080	229,025	222,505	8,211	91,402
D06	Community and Enterprise Function	512,410	512,410	96,195	96,195	693,196	541,618	214,544	174,965
D07	Unfinished Housing Estates	204,879	204,879	163,003	163,003	13,015	294,721	488	282,556
D08	Building Control	200,999	200,999	48,042	48,042	163,465	167,364	32,314	43,790
D09	Economic Development and Promotion	2,869,383	2,869,383	2,132,837	2,132,837	2,555,483	2,246,599	1,976,047	1,585,605
D10	Property Management	417	417	12,915	12,915	0	427	14,415	12,915
D11	Heritage and Conservation Services	230,628	230,628	68,725	68,725	269,894	212,626	133,873	66,770
D12	Agency & Recoupable Services	0	0	0	0	0	431,413	0	373,551
Service Division Total		7,214,436	7,214,436	3,728,201	3,728,201	6,645,593	6,678,317	3,283,493	3,330,946

Table B Expenditure & Income for 2014 and Estimated Outturn for 2013

Division & Services		2014				2013			
		Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	Code	€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
Environmental Services									
	E01	250,326	250,327	48,244	48,244	3,963,187	2,616,493	4,586,498	3,080,344
	E02	595,496	595,496	577,295	577,295	505,259	506,514	337,559	352,489
	E03	30,005	30,005	539	539	12,743	12,857	488	544
	E04	0	0	0	0	0	0	400	20
	E05	618,006	618,006	102,063	102,063	623,083	569,488	112,440	84,680
	E06	275,103	275,103	6,561	6,561	271,085	258,128	5,933	6,613
	E07	532,000	532,000	271,799	271,799	510,887	524,669	295,019	278,485
	E08	167,969	167,969	5,339	5,339	185,724	138,679	4,828	5,381
	E09	130,162	130,162	683	683	127,057	133,642	618	689
	E10	247,331	247,331	113,165	113,165	249,544	198,561	130,362	108,730
	E11	6,113,620	6,113,620	4,568,599	4,568,599	6,167,521	6,528,989	4,676,501	4,312,523
	E12	311,198	311,198	214,679	214,679	351,635	341,862	126,274	214,795
	E13	1,306,910	1,306,910	743,588	743,588	1,090,230	1,284,215	556,703	745,725
	E14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Service Division Total	10,578,126	10,578,127	6,652,554	6,652,554	14,057,955	13,114,097	10,833,623	9,191,018
Recreation & Amenity									
	F02	2,805,373	2,805,373	281,021	281,021	2,782,960	2,760,141	178,782	207,356
	F03	71,646	71,646	332	332	65,108	64,933	301	335
	F04	251,222	233,722	116,407	116,407	250,599	263,187	103,604	118,023
	F05	248,443	248,443	49,883	49,883	254,935	251,996	49,320	49,930
	Service Division Total	3,376,684	3,359,184	447,643	447,643	3,353,602	3,340,257	332,007	375,644

Table B									
Expenditure & Income for 2014 and Estimated Outturn for 2013									
Division & Services		2014				2013			
		Expenditure		Income		Expenditure		Income	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€	€	€	€	€
	Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare								
Code									
G02	Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours	216,860	216,860	60,502	60,502	209,854	263,437	60,318	95,534
G03	Coastal Protection	182,735	182,735	78,427	78,427	157,784	81,511	78,099	15,454
G04	Veterinary Service	547,676	547,676	331,148	331,148	530,067	552,490	290,850	358,283
G05	Educational Support Services	2,854,941	2,854,941	2,491,287	2,491,287	5,000,457	4,988,381	4,618,224	4,618,593
	Service Division Total	3,802,212	3,802,212	2,961,364	2,961,364	5,898,162	5,885,819	5,047,491	5,087,864
	Miscellaneous Services								
Code									
H01	Profit/Loss Machinery Account	908,091	908,091	771,631	771,631	997,264	889,041	870,693	771,802
H03	Adminstration of Rates	1,867,282	1,166,978	4,751	4,751	1,153,295	1,204,613	4,406	4,792
H04	Franchise Costs	378,281	378,281	123,976	123,976	228,694	226,224	3,596	4,008
H05	Operation of Morgue and Coroner Expenses	217,610	217,611	1,459	1,459	216,257	232,305	1,319	1,470
H06	Weighbridges	3,600	3,600	0	0	4,800	3,542	200	0
H07	Operation of Markets and Casual Trading	2,000	2,000	7,200	7,200	0	0	3,600	7,200
H08	Malicious Damage	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	5,000	0	5,000	0
H09	Local Representation/Civic Leadership	1,209,901	1,227,401	3,000	3,000	798,374	799,852	3,000	3,104
H10	Motor Taxation	945,123	945,123	50,844	50,844	966,780	853,286	53,891	51,144
H11	Agency & Recoupable Services	268,892	268,892	1,408,463	1,408,463	111,583	228,785	1,452,393	1,396,394
	Service Division Total	5,805,780	5,122,977	2,376,324	2,376,324	4,482,047	4,437,648	2,398,098	2,239,914
	OVERALL TOTAL	68,594,839	67,759,537	49,988,896	49,988,896	66,240,239	66,833,473	44,349,516	44,908,090

Table C CALCULATION OF THE ANNUAL RATE ON VALUATION						
Louth County Council						
Name of Town	Money Demanded		Irrecoverable rates and cost of collection		Total Sum to be raised (Sum of Col 3 & Col 5)	Annual Rate on Valuation to meet sum required in Col 6
	Estimated Col 2 €	Adopted Col 3 €	Estimated Col 4 €	Adopted Col 5 €		
Ardee Town Council	32,977	32,977	0	0	32,977	1.77
TOTAL	32,977	32,977	0	0	32,977	1.77

Table D	
ANALYSIS OF BUDGET 2014 INCOME FROM GOODS AND SERVICES	
Source of Income	2014 €
Rents from Houses	2,750,000
Housing Loans Interest & Charges	105,000
Parking Fines/Charges	36,000
Planning Fees	205,700
Sale/leasing of other property / Industrial Sites	12,915
Fire Charges	380,250
Library Fees/Fines	60,000
Local Authority Contributions	5,922,889
Superannuation	840,000
Irish Water Income	18,494,876
Misc. (Detail)	3,530,756
TOTAL	32,338,386

Table E	
ANALYSIS OF BUDGET INCOME 2014 FROM GRANTS AND SUBSIDIES	
	2014 €
Department of the Environment, Community & Local Government	
Housing and Building	4,387,374
Water Services	30,000
Development Management	67,142
Environmental Services	1,321,800
Agriculture, Education, Health & Welfare	156,000
Miscellaneous Services	5,000
	5,967,316
Other Departments and Bodies	
NRA/DoT	6,527,042
Arts, Sports & Tourism	40,000
Social & Family Affairs	65,000
Defence	90,000
Education and Science	2,487,721
Library Council	25,000
Transport and Marine	75,000
Justice Equality and Law Reform	5,000
Other	2,368,432
	11,683,195
Total Grants & Subsidies	17,650,511

Division A – Housing and Building

Housing Demand

Housing Services continue to be driven by demand. During the course of Spring the statutory tri-annual assessment of housing need was undertaken.

The impact of the Assessment can be seen in the following table, but it also demonstrates that it is likely that a significant number of those who were taken off the list have since re-joined the list on an incrementally increasing basis.

HOUSING DEMAND	April 13	May 13	Nov13
Number of applicants approved for 1 bed units	398	312	386
Number of applicants approved for 2 bed units	411	295	340
Number applicants approved for 3 bed units	223	159	161
Number applicants approved for 4 bed units	33	29	30
Number applicants approved for 5 bed units	4	2	2
Number of applicants on social housing waiting list	1,069	797	919

The table however does also point to a consistency in demand for One and Two bedroom units and decreasing demand for what was considered traditional 3 bedroom family accommodation. This is explained by the large profile of one parent families or individuals who have access rights to children. This demographic will obviously have to be captured in any supply adjustment provided for.

Supply

Housing Supply will continue to be focused exclusively on units procured through Leasing. During the course of 2013, we saw the completion and commencement of allocation of both social leased and Incremental Purchase Units at Goirt Na Mara, Seafield Road, Blackrock.

Likewise in the same period and to year end we will see approximately 250 units of accommodation offered to qualified applicants. The refusal of offers of accommodation continues to be a concern and has led to an increase in voids during the course of 2013.

With a refusal rate of currently 30%, the above process explains how some units can be void for a longer period. It is proposed during the course of 2014 to introduce a Choice Based Lending Model of allocation to address this matter specifically.

Choice Based Lending presents an opportunity for interested applicants to secure a tenancy in an area of choice. The model operates on the basis that the Housing Authority advertises each vacancy that arises. Only those that express an interest in same will be considered for that unit, thus the chances of a person refusing a unit are less likely.

Maintenance of Stock

Housing Maintenance is administered over three headings and during the course of 2013 the following works were completed in Louth County Council:

- General Maintenance Requests - 584
- Voids Work - 35
- Tenant Adaption Works - 10

Within Maintenance, this is further categorised into a Programme of

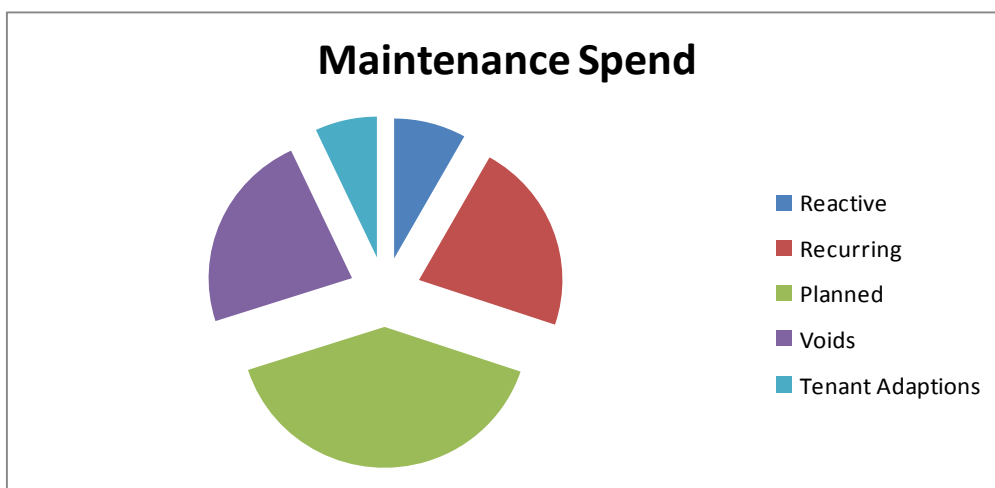
- Reactive - Standard Repairs
- Recurring - Boiler Servicing & Septic Tank Emptying
- Planned Maintenance - Fabric Upgrade

In 2013 the following number of units will have benefited from these works.

Type of Maintenance	Number
Reactive	584
Recurring	425
Planned	115

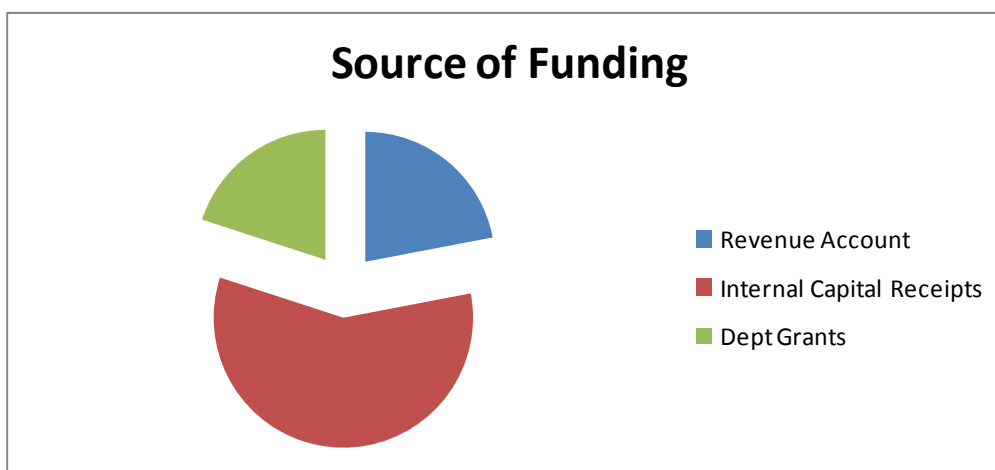
This year saw a concentration on, the completion of the servicing of all heating boilers and the commencement of the Energy Fabric Upgrade of our properties. In the current year 225 units across the county have received a combined enhancement of attic and cavity wall insulation and roof venting. This programme has been supported by the Department of Environment through their Job Stimulus Programme and it is hoped that in 2014, at least the same number of units will be completed.

The Pie chart over indicates how the overall 2013 programme spend has been broken, across a total budget line of approximately €1,000,000.



These works have been funded through a combination of current revenue funding and investment from Internal Capital Receipts and direct financial assistance from the Housing Section of the Department of Environment.

Again the chart below, illustrates the source of funding with regard to 2013 maintenance.



Estate Management

Estate management will continue to focus on tenancy inspections which have been re-introduced during 2012. This provides an opportunity both to ensure that all properties are being properly managed and that the welfare of the tenants is being monitored. The Table below illustrates activity to date.

	LCC
Pre Tenancy Training	76
Tenancy(House) Inspections	169
TOTAL	245

During the course of 2014, this process is going to be enhanced by focusing on areas where there is identified high incidence of complaints and Anti Social Behaviour. It is hoped that a mapping ICT solution will assist in this process. Already, in two parts of Dundalk, intensive locality focused inspections were carried out, with some quite positive outcomes achieved.

Internally, the Housing Authority accept complaints and reviews them taking a case management approach to ensure that the proper staffing resource is assigned to review matters raised. All matters are examined in the context of the Council's published policies which include our Estate Management Policy, Anti Social Behaviour (ASB) Policy and Tenant Handbook. The staff involved include the actual Housing Officer, the Tenant Liaison Officer, and Investigation Officer with regard to Anti Social Behaviour and/or the Social Worker.

A review of the complaints made under our Anti Social Behaviour Policy for the same periods from 2010 to 2013 shows the following.

	2010	2011	2012	2013
Number of Complaints received	115	106	264	373
Number of Sanctions applied	41	38	20	33
% that resulted in a sanction	35.65%	35.84%	7.57%	8.84%

While it shows complaints rising, it does show less sanctions arising. This can be explained by complainees becoming less tolerant, the process becoming more robust and more likely multiple complaints being generated for the same incident. From October last, we are now addressing matters by the incident and not by number of complaints received.

One area of concern that has developed is the level of nuisance generated by Halloween activities especially in the southern half of the county. In 2014, there will be a targeted campaign to address the issues that continue to arise at Halloween time, which ultimately add costs to existing services.

During 2013, the Tenant Handbook was updated and it is now available to all new and existing tenants and should be considered as a very informative "plain English" guide to both tenants and members, alike.

Housing Grants

The Housing Grants Schemes continues, with demand always outstripping the resources available. The Scheme again will re-open in January and this year it is hoped to ring-fence some funding within the scheme to address some of the Priority 2 applicants. Louth County Council provide a match funding element of 20% to the funds supplied by the Department of the Environment. The budget presented is based on receiving a similar allocation to 2013.

Homelessness

The support given to Homeless Services has continued at a significant level in Louth and this was recognised by the designation of Louth as a regional lead for the counties of Louth, Cavan and Monaghan. All approved facilities in the region are now funded through Louth County Council from a delegated budget from the Department of Environment. The table below illustrates these services supported by the Housing Authorities in the Region.

Facility	County	Capacity utilised by Housing Authorities	Overall Bed Night Capacity
Dundalk Simon Community	Louth	19	26
Drogheda Homeless Aid Association Ltd	Louth	14	21
Women's Aid (Dundalk) Ltd	Louth	5 Rooms (Domestic Violence)	23
Drogheda Women's & Children Refuge Centre Ltd	Louth	3 Beds (Homeless) 5 Units (Domestic Violence) 5 Rooms (Domestic Violence)	35
The Society of St Vincent De Paul, Cavan Town	Cavan	-	6
Castleblayney Trust for the Homeless Needy and Unemployed	Monaghan	3	3

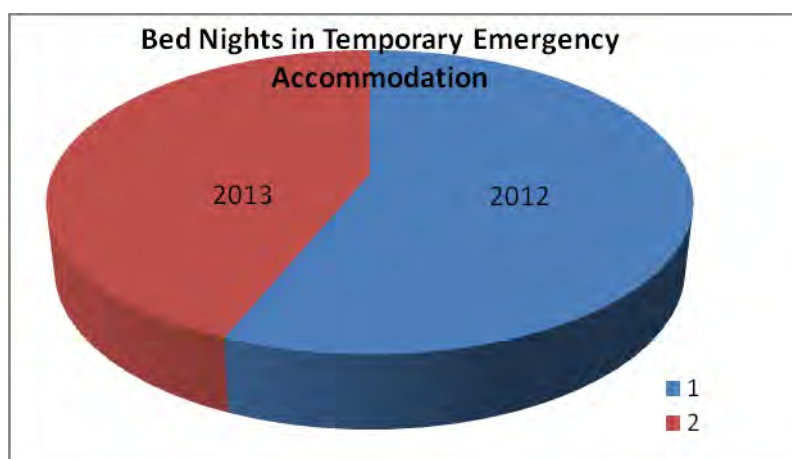
During the course of 2013, we concluded the adoption of the second Regional Homeless Action Plan and in particular have developed a very client focused model of service delivery in Louth.

The Plan is a very focused and target driven document which is attempting to address the many issues that result in a presentation of homelessness. The Plan recognises that homelessness is not necessarily the cause, but is the outcome or symptom of the underlying issue.

On that basis, almost every solution requires a multi-agency solution or support to address the matter. The table over illustrates the originating causes to presentations in the North East.

Reason for presenting as Homeless	Louth %	Monaghan%	Cavan%
Domestic Violence	25	10	6
Addictive Behaviour	24	5	0
Family & Relationship Breakdown	15	21	50
Mental Health & Addictive Behaviour	11	8	19
Prison Release	2	3	19
Other (includes HRC, Financial, anti social behaviour, unfit housing, Weather)	23	48	6

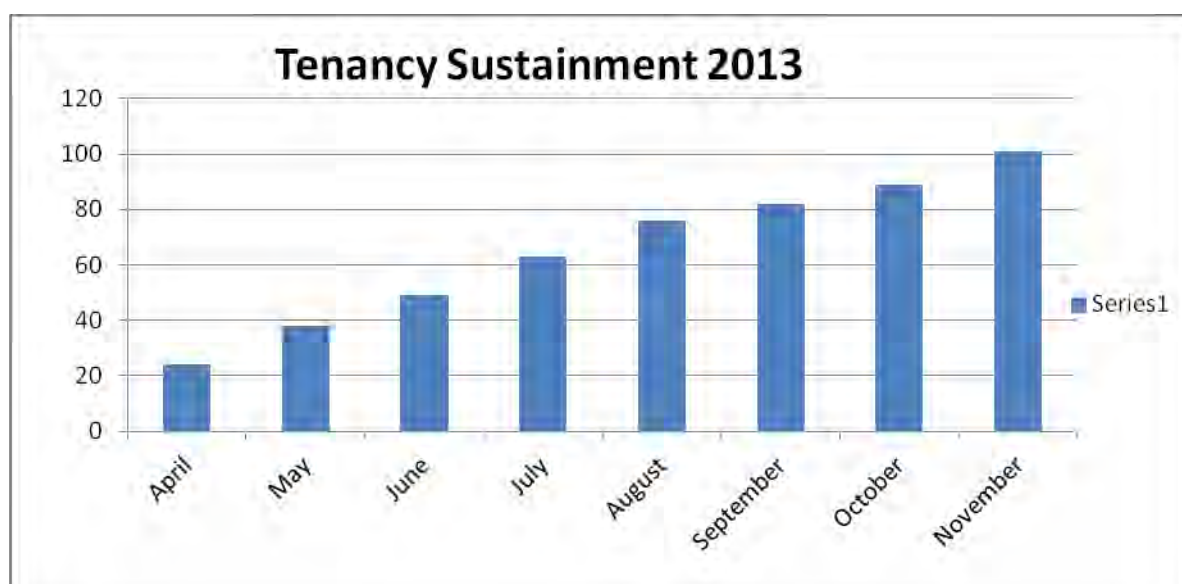
The response to the issue of Homelessness is now governed by the national policy of Housing First which concentrates funding on Tenancy Sustainment for those at risk of becoming homeless and those who are exiting Temporary Emergency Accommodation as opposed to simply supporting Emergency Accommodation. This process is being utilised in Louth and the North East and the chart below illustrates the trend with regard to persons provided with Temporary Emergency Accommodation between 2012 and 2013.



The chart shows a decrease of 22% in the number of people placed in Temporary Emergency Accommodation.



The greater emphasis placed on Tenancy Sustainment is being used to prevent homelessness, to sustain people in existing tenancies and return people to independent living. The increase in Tenancy Sustainment is reflected in the following chart of progress in 2013 and has been delivered with the provision of Nine Tenancy Sustainment Workers in the Region, provided by a number of organisations.



One of the actions in the Regional Plan has been the development of the Annual Rough Sleeper Count. While the number found rough sleeping in Louth decreased from three persons to two persons in 2013, there is still a significant concern with regard to those who occasionally rough sleep or squat and consideration is being given to targeting this cohort and encourage them to engage with services.

The Department of Environment have confirmed the national homeless budget for 2014 as being the same as 2013, but have indicated that the Minister will shortly issue a direction to Housing Authorities on the categories of spend that are to be targeted. It is anticipated that the model in Louth will be confirmed as the model to be pursued nationally.

Traveller Matters

During the course of 2013 the only Halting Site in the County Council functional area was closed and the tenants transferred to a two unit development in Dunleer, as provided for in the Traveller Accommodation Programme.

The following table outlines the progress achieved in securing accommodation over the last 3 Traveller Accommodation Programmes

Programme	Social Housing Target	Social Achieved	Group Housing Target	Group Achieved	Halting Site Target	Achieved
2000-2004	33	46	13	2	4	3
2005-2008	58	46	4	2	3	3
2009-2013	66	31	6	2	4	3
Total to Date	157	123	23	6	-	-

The new Traveller Accommodation Programme is currently going through its consultation phase and will be brought to Council in the New Year for adoption.

Administration

In the last number of weeks there have been additional changes to the working structure of the Housing Department. The most recent changes arose out of a necessity to ensure business continuity of the service but also coincided with the revised Local Government Structures planned for the new Council.

There is now one single housing office in Dundalk, in County Hall and already the merging of the two original offices has achieved positive economies of scale. Rent Collection has been centralised in Drogheda and again this action will deliver better results, as consistent and practised expertise is applied to all accounts.

TABLES

HOUSING AND BUILDING					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
A0101	Maintenance of LA Housing Units	1,206,000	1,206,000	835,000	1,064,808
A0102	Maintenance of Traveller Accommodation Units	2,000	2,000	13,500	4,000
A0103	Traveller Accommodation Management	0	0	97,334	31,559
A0199	Service Support Costs	577,536	577,536	543,235	673,134
	Maintenance/Improvement of LA Housing Units	1,785,536	1,785,536	1,489,069	1,773,501
A0201	Assessment of Housing Needs, Allocs. & Trans.	170,419	170,419	226,150	281,804
A0299	Service Support Costs	145,660	145,660	144,658	137,639
	Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer	316,079	316,079	370,808	419,443
A0301	Debt Management & Rent Assessment	87,791	87,791	133,640	134,420
A0399	Service Support Costs	82,438	82,438	79,966	76,086
	Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration	170,229	170,229	213,606	210,506
A0401	Housing Estate Management	18,000	18,000	19,500	18,000
A0402	Tenancy Management	209,913	209,913	141,080	134,367
A0499	Service Support Costs	64,581	64,581	63,344	60,270
	Housing Community Development Support	292,494	292,494	223,924	212,637
A0501	Homeless Grants Other Bodies	1,100,000	1,100,000	900,000	0
A0502	Homeless Service	0	0	300	900,018
A0599	Service Support Costs	168,886	168,886	129,769	244,458
	Administration of Homeless Service	1,268,886	1,268,886	1,030,069	1,144,476
A0601	Technical and Administrative Support	177,933	177,933	119,670	126,094
A0699	Service Support Costs	57,226	57,226	62,567	60,483
	Support to Housing Capital Prog.	235,159	235,159	182,237	186,577
A0701	RAS Operations	1,150,000	1,150,000	900,000	1,176,151
A0702	Long Term Leasing	20,000	20,000	0	0
A0799	Service Support Costs	127,780	127,780	144,640	29,417
	RAS and Leasing Programme	1,297,780	1,297,780	1,044,640	1,205,568

HOUSING AND BUILDING					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
A0801	Loan Interest and Other Charges	911,595	911,595	735,455	702,000
A0802	Debt Management Housing Loans	100	100	23,260	94
A0899	Service Support Costs	45,860	45,860	46,168	43,928
	Housing Loans	957,555	957,555	804,883	746,022
A0901	Housing Adaptation Grant Scheme	0	0	55,000	0
A0904	Other Housing Grant Payments	1,601,500	1,534,000	1,534,000	1,565,000
A0905	Mobility Aids Housing Grants	40,000	40,000	40,000	0
A0999	Service Support Costs	249,151	249,151	216,699	228,481
	Housing Grants	1,890,651	1,823,151	1,845,699	1,793,481
A1101	Agency & Recoupable Service	0	0	1,500	4,625
A1199	Service Support Costs	4,000	4,000	4,606	8,591
	Agency & Recoupable Services	4,000	4,000	6,106	13,216
	Service Division Total	8,218,369	8,150,869	7,211,041	7,705,427

HOUSING AND BUILDING				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants & Subsidies				
Environment, Community and Local Government	4,387,374	4,387,374	3,503,800	3,667,913
Other	0	0	50,000	50,000
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	4,387,374	4,387,374	3,553,800	3,717,913
Goods and Services				
Rents from houses	2,750,000	2,750,000	2,600,100	2,620,000
Housing Loans Interest & Charges	105,000	105,000	122,000	122,000
Superannuation	70,565	70,565	63,811	63,811
Local Authority Contributions	90,000	90,000	100,000	100,000
Other income	851,900	851,900	829,000	827,314
Total Goods and Services (b)	3,867,465	3,867,465	3,714,911	3,733,125
Total Income c=(a+b)	8,254,839	8,254,839	7,268,711	7,451,038

Division B– Road Transport and Safety

County Louth has the following **lengths of road** across the various categories

ROAD CATEGORY	LENGTH IN KILOMETRES
Motorway	37.8
National Primary	55.1
National Secondary	37.4
Regional	249.3
Local Primary	305
Local Secondary	712
Local Tertiary	224
TOTAL LENGTH	1602.6

There is a total of 14,322 **public lights** in County Louth. Only 12,922 of them are currently taken in charge. There are 4,991 public lights in the county council area with the remaining approximately 8,000 lights in Dundalk and Drogheda.

We also provide a substantial **School Warden Service** in County Louth with:

- 5 School Wardens in the County Area
- 8 School Wardens in Dundalk
- 14 School Wardens in Drogheda

There is also a considerable programme delivered by our **Road Safety** Staff who work closely with the Road Safety Association. Key achievements during 2013 included:

- Promotion of World Remembrance Day.
- Publication and distribution of “A Guide to Driving, Cycling and Walking Safely in Dundalk” (in English & Irish).
- Christmas anti-drink driving promotion “Gift a Lift”.
- Seat Belt Sheriff Programme delivered to 17 primary schools across the county. Schools are visited on rotation by this programme.
- Distribution of road safety promotional materials (posters, leaflets, high visibility vests).
- 2 Collision Prevention Programme meetings.

TRANSPORTATION

The general condition of roads in County Louth remains quite good and often better than those found in many other counties. It is appreciated that the funding available to this division has reduced in recent years and it is a significant challenge to continue to maintain the roads to the required standard. However in 2013 €10.96m was expended on roads in the county. €6.19m in grants and €0.44m from other income and €4.33m from own resources.

Clearly with limited funding available, the prioritisation of work takes on an added importance and the funding that is being provided for 2014 will once again have to be used to protect the roads carrying most traffic, through a programme of short stretches of overlays, patching, minor works and surface dressing.

The Winter Maintenance Programme will continue as in previous years covering national primary, national secondary and regional routes in the county. If the large number of call-outs for winter gritting continues at its current pace this will put further pressure on the Roads Budget in 2014. Call-outs for winter gritting in the first 6 months of 2013 totalled 66.

During 2013 the following schemes were progressed:

- **N53 DUNDALK CASTLEBLAYNEY ROAD** – Phase I and II of this major improvement scheme were completed. Preparatory works are ongoing on contracts to carry out ground investigation and archaeological excavation on Phase III from Philipstown to Hackballscross with the Part 8 planning process for this phase currently underway.
- **N52 ARDEE BYPASS** – Archaeological and Site Investigations progressed during the year. Preliminary design works are ongoing and contract documentation is being prepared for a Design Build (DB) contract. This project will therefore be ready to go immediately to tender should funding become available.
- **CARLINGFORD TO OMEATH GREENWAY**
 - The Carlingford to Omeath Greenway consists of 2 Phases:
 - Phase 1A is a 3.6km stretch of Greenway consisting of pedestrian and cycle trail between Carlingford Marina and Greer's Quay. A contractor has been appointed in conjunction with a Water Services Scheme.
 - Phase 1B is 2km from Greer's Quay to Omeath, works are underway and are expected to be completed shortly.
- **NARROW WATER BRIDGE** - During the course of the year, the project achieved many important milestones, including:
 - Grant of Letter of Offer under INTERREG Programme for €17.4million.
 - Receipt of 4 valid Tenders for the project.

- Award of minor contracts by Louth County Council, including Site Investigation and Archaeology.
- However, due to the preferred bidder's tender price being considerably higher than the original estimate, there have been ongoing efforts since July to find alternative funding to bridge the gap of more than €14million. The Councils in Louth, Newry & Mourne and Down have between them approved funding of €4.25million for the project and efforts continue to find the remaining amount of close to €10million.
- At the present moment, the INTERREG Letter of Offer has been officially withdrawn and the project remains at serious risk. The preferred bidder's tender is also due to expire shortly.
- **PORT ACCESS NORTHERN CROSS ROUTE (DROGHEDA)** - While no construction funding is available at the present time, land acquisition on the mainline continued during 2013. Again, this project will be able to go to tender at short notice should funding become available.
- **CAVAN DUNDALK ROUTE** - Works are ongoing on preliminary design of the route for which Cavan is the lead partner. An archaeology desktop study is ongoing. With the Red Bog Section in Louth already completed, further works will only be undertaken in sections as funding becomes available.
- **STATION ROAD R166** - This road, which links the M1 Motorway to the R132 at Castlebellingham, is in need of upgrading to remove a number of bad bends. Works have commenced in 2013 on realignment of bends at Drumleck.
- **N1 NORTH OF DUNDALK** - Maintenance of the N1 from Ballymac to the Border was transferred in mid-2013 to a private contractor, GSJ, who were appointed by the NRA following a tender process.
- **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES** - The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport provided funding of €393,320 for a new community involvement scheme to carry out maintenance works on local tertiary roads. The Area Engineers worked with the local groups to progress the schemes.

The extent of works to be undertaken in 2014 will depend entirely on the level of funding available, particularly from grants. The grant allocations received in 2013 were considerably better than anticipated and we must hope that the level of grants for 2014 is at least as good.

ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
B0102	NP – Pavement Overlay/Reconstruction	225,000	225,000	200,000	225,000
B0103	NP – Winter Maintenance	30,000	30,000	55,000	65,000
B0105	NP - General Maintenance	70,000	70,000	125,000	150,000
B0199	Service Support Costs	224,664	224,664	244,474	236,129
National Primary Road – Maintenance and Improvement		549,664	549,664	624,474	676,129
B0202	NS - Overlay/Reconstruction	0	0	150,000	0
B0204	NS - Winter Maintenance	30,000	30,000	28,000	53,000
B0206	NS - General Maintenance	30,116	30,116	32,000	30,116
B0299	Service Support Costs	217,382	217,382	238,332	230,382
National Secondary Road – Maintenance and Improvement		277,498	277,498	448,332	313,498
B0301	Regional Roads Surface Dressing	100,000	100,000	0	98,560
B0302	Reg Rd Surface Rest/Road Reconstruction/Overlay	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,000,000	918,405
B0303	Regional Road Winter Maintenance	100,000	100,000	160,000	180,000
B0304	Regional Road Bridge Maintenance	117,500	117,500	100,000	90,000
B0305	Regional Road General Maintenance Works	250,000	250,000	650,000	600,000
B0306	Regional Road General Improvement Works	5,000	5,000	50,000	5,000
B0399	Service Support Costs	549,259	549,259	531,260	493,274
Regional Road – Improvement and Maintenance		2,321,759	2,321,759	2,491,260	2,385,239
B0401	Local Road Surface Dressing	500,000	500,000	245,000	558,490
B0402	Local Rd Surface Rest/Road Reconstruction/Overlay	1,500,000	1,500,000	1,480,000	1,523,881
B0403	Local Roads Winter Maintenance	18,000	18,000	27,000	508
B0404	Local Roads Bridge Maintenance	0	0	100,000	0
B0405	Local Roads General Maintenance Works	867,500	800,000	700,000	1,000,000
B0406	Local Roads General Improvement Works	650,000	650,000	300,000	713,276
B0499	Service Support Costs	1,484,121	1,484,121	1,475,378	1,457,021
Local Road - Maintenance and Improvement		5,019,621	4,952,121	4,327,378	5,253,176
B0501	Public Lighting Operating Costs	650,000	650,000	536,000	650,000
B0599	Service Support Costs	105,706	105,706	122,918	116,276
Public Lighting		755,706	755,706	658,918	766,276
B0601	Traffic Management	5,000	5,000	20,000	5,000
B0602	Traffic Maintenance	200	200	0	200
B0699	Service Support Costs	82,128	82,128	86,207	83,879
Traffic Management Improvement		87,328	87,328	106,207	89,079

ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
B0701	Low Cost Remedial Measures	210,750	210,750	250,000	210,750
B0799	Service Support Costs	224,637	224,637	222,462	217,469
	Road Safety Engineering Improvements	435,387	435,387	472,462	428,219
B0801	School Wardens	15,310	15,310	15,310	15,310
B0802	Publicity and Promotion Road Safety	15,840	15,840	23,840	15,840
B0899	Service Support Costs	38,033	38,033	39,279	37,870
	Road Safety Promotion/Education	69,183	69,183	78,429	69,020
B0902	Operation of Street Parking	34,500	34,500	85,224	138,130
B0903	Parking Enforcement	6,526	6,526	14,776	10,000
B0999	Service Support Costs	92,451	92,451	101,313	96,397
	Car Parking	133,477	133,477	201,313	244,527
B1001	Administration of Roads Capital Programme	119,631	119,631	143,055	143,055
B1099	Service Support Costs	89,944	89,944	91,039	86,622
	Support to Roads Capital Programme	209,575	209,575	234,094	229,677
B1101	Agency & Recoupable Service	548,045	548,045	391,214	586,108
B1199	Service Support Costs	213,830	213,830	119,011	198,736
	Agency & Recoupable Services	761,875	761,875	510,225	784,844
	Service Division Total	10,621,073	10,553,573	10,153,092	11,239,684

ROAD TRANSPORT & SAFETY				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
NRA	6,527,042	6,527,042	4,320,000	6,195,348
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	6,527,042	6,527,042	4,320,000	6,195,348
Goods and Services				
Parking Fines & Charges	36,000	36,000	182,000	153,000
Superannuation	150,275	150,275	135,891	135,890
Local Authority Contributions	159,278	159,278	77,225	77,225
Other income	15,000	15,000	8,000	271,311
Total Goods and Services (b)	360,553	360,553	403,116	637,426
Total Income c=(a+b)	6,887,595	6,887,595	4,723,116	6,832,774

Division C – Water Services

From 1st January 2014, the responsibility for the provision of Water and Wastewater Services will transfer to Irish Water. All water infrastructure assets solely used for water services activities will transfer to Irish Water. Assets that are not solely used for water services activities will transfer, subject to agreement, later in 2014. Louth County Council will retain the supervision of Group Water Schemes and Public Conveniences. In addition, Louth County Council may only carry out work authorised by Irish Water.

Legislation

The Water Services Act 2013 commenced on 27th March 2013 establishing Irish Water and the Water Services Bill (No. 2) 2013 was published on 2nd December and is expected to be passed into law later this year.

Summary of legislation

- Provisions prohibiting sale of any part of Irish Water including water services infrastructure.
- Preparation of Water Services Strategic Plans and Capital Investment Plans by Irish Water.
- Provision that Irish Water will charge all customers in receipt of public water services.
- Prohibition on the disconnection of domestic customers due to non-payment of charges but will have power to restrict supply.
- Delivery of services by LAs on behalf of Irish Water through service level agreements.
- Designation of the Commissioner for Energy Regulation as economic regulator for water services delivered by Irish Water.
- EPA to be environmental regulator for Irish Water.
- Corporate governance provisions that will apply to Irish Water.

Service Level Agreement (SLA)

Local Authorities will carry out work on behalf of Irish Water under an agreed national SLA. This is a 12 year binding agreement between Irish Water and Local Authorities outlining the shared objectives, roles, and responsibilities of both parties. It provides for the recognition of the expertise of Local Authority staff and the full cost recovery for Local Authorities of expenditure on water

services initially. The Agreement also contains an opt-out provision for either party, and facilitates the transfer of staff to Irish Water, while preserving their terms and conditions of employment, in the event of opt out. Irish Water will move to performance related indicators, (e.g. water quality, sampling rates, etc.) in time. Finally, it covers the use of branding/logos by the local authority while working on behalf of Irish Water. In addition each Local Authority will have an individual annual Service Plan dealing specifically with the service in that county.

Transition Staff

There are two Irish Water employees working directly with Louth County Council since 20th November, to assist in preparation for the change-over on 1st Jan 2014 and beyond. They are currently conducting Impact Assessment workshops and developing local transition plans. Their purpose is to identify issues of concern and provide solutions. Two Louth County Council Water Services employees have been assigned to the Transition Team also.

Customer Contact

Irish Water call centre is now operational in Cork and will operate on a 24 hour basis later in 2014. The centre will deal with connection queries ONLY on water services from 1st Jan 2014, but will be fully operational from 31st March 2013. Part of the process to be developed will include an interface with Elected Representatives. Irish Water will refer queries to Local Authorities for action and protocols are being developed in relation to same. Local Authorities will require prior work authorisation unless it's an emergency. The Call Centre will facilitate the establishment of a tracked response system for all queries and complaints.

Water Billing

The charges for water both commercial and domestic will be set by CER. It is anticipated that Universal charging will apply from 2015. In the case of Non-Domestic Customers, the Local Authority will continue to read the meters and process the information. Non domestic bills will issue from the Local Authority on behalf of Irish Water from Jan 2014. In the case of Domestic Customers, they will become the responsibility of Irish Water and Billing is expected to commence in Jan 2015.

Metering Programme

The Council have been carrying out surveys of all domestic connections in the County. In Phase 1 of the surveying it was established that there are 37,475 domestic customers in Louth. The surveying is 90% complete (at 22 November 2013), but there are 3,087 "not founds". The surveying staff will be retained for a further period to try and establish these not founds or shared connections.

The water meter installations will be carried out by the IW contractor and is scheduled to commence in Louth in Q2 of 2014. In many cases this will involve the installation of a new boundary box and the provision of an automatic meter reading (AMR).

There are approximately 3000 non domestic customers in Louth.

Group Water Schemes (GWS)

This is one of the areas where there is generally no change for Local Authorities as Irish Water will not be taking over GWS. All GWS in Louth are private supplies and the main source is bore holes. They are not connected to public mains.

Economic Development & Planning

The role of Irish Water is to be defined in the legislation, but Irish Water will have to develop both Strategic Investment Plans and Capital Investment Plans. Irish Water Strategic Investment Plans will cover a 25 year period and must have regard to both the National Spatial Strategy and the Regional Planning Guidelines. The approval of the Minister is also required. The Irish Water Capital Investment Plans will cover a 6 year time period and will be useful for submitting tariff proposals to CER. These must take account of provisions set out in Strategic Investment Plans. These plans will have regard to the River Basin Management Plans, County Development Plans and the resources available to Irish Water.

Water Services Investment Plan 2014 – 2016

The Initial value of Irish Water expenditure is estimated at €250m per year. However, the estimated spend requirement is closer to €600m per year. It is anticipated that the WSIP will focus on phased improvements, Licence requirements and low cost solutions initially. Any contracts already in progress will not be affected.

Louth Capital Program

Cooley Regional WS Network (Omeath)

- Tender recommendation to appoint Carty Contractors Ltd was approved by the Department at a cost of is €2,290,000 excl VAT.
- This scheme also includes the building of the Greenway which is being funded by the Department of Transport, Tourism & Sport.
- Contractor has commenced on site and is scheduled for completion mid 2014.

Drogheda Water Supply Scheme - Staleen WTP Upgrade

- The Council hope to progress this scheme with Irish Water in 2014. It is our intention to go to tender for the procurement of Consultants for Stage 2 of this scheme through the Irish Water frameworks.

Dundalk Water Supply Scheme - Cavanhill Upgrade

- The Council has submitted details regarding the Cavanhill Upgrade to Irish Water.

Dundalk & Drogheda WWTP Nutrient Removal

- To meet the requirements of the Licence Louth County Council has appointed a Consultant who specialises in process management to address the compliance in regard to nitrates and phosphates at Dundalk Waste Water treatment plant.

Ardee Sewerage Scheme

- DECLG have given approval for the upgrade of the sewerage scheme and the network element of the project subject to certain clarifications. We submitted details regarding Ardee Sewerage Scheme to Irish Water.

Water Conservation Project Stage 3 Mains Rehabilitation Dundalk & Drogheda Bundles.

Unaccounted For Water (UFW) Summary for County Louth Oct-13				
Scheme	Inflow	Accounted for water	UFW	%UFW
Dundalk Total	13767	8601	5166	37.5
Drogheda Total	12689	5674	7015	55.3
County Area Total	12740.5	8270	4470.5	35.1
County Total	39196.5	22545	16651.5	42.5

The above table shows unaccounted for water at 42.5% for the entire county. When this is examined for the two towns Dundalk and Drogheda it can be seen that the unaccounted for water is 37.5% and 55.3% respectively. The water conservation

project stage 3 which will be on site 2014 will impact positively on reducing these figures.

- Tender recommendation for Advance Construction Contract approved by DECLG. O'Kane Civil Engineering has been recommended as successful contractor at a cost of €1.2m.
- The Contractor is expected to commence work in December 2013.
- Contract documents being completed by Consultants for the remaining two contracts based on priority list – 40 watermain with total value at €4.5m.

WATER

The 2012 EPA Drinking Water Quality Report has indicated 100% compliance in regard to microbiological parameters and 98% in regard to chemical parameters which were in main outside the control of the Council. The 2013 results are looking similar and we do not anticipate any change for 2014.

The daily water consumption including unaccounted for water is 47330 cubic metres a day.

WATER SERVICES					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
C0101	Water Plants & Networks	6,623,620	6,623,620	4,974,377	4,979,877
C0199	Service Support Costs	1,236,980	1,236,980	960,268	847,769
	Water Supply	7,860,600	7,860,600	5,934,645	5,827,646
C0201	Waste Plants and Networks	8,271,179	8,271,179	6,716,034	6,715,941
C0299	Service Support Costs	681,874	681,874	547,248	530,294
	Waste Water Treatment	8,953,053	8,953,053	7,263,282	7,246,235
C0301	Debt Management Water and Waste Water	361,503	361,503	359,495	359,495
C0399	Service Support Costs	165,360	165,360	168,230	160,067
	Collection of Water and Waste Water Charges	526,863	526,863	527,725	519,562
C0401	Operation and Maintenance of Public Conveniences	123,467	123,467	130,467	130,467
C0499	Service Support Costs	106,953	106,953	99,108	96,341
	Public Conveniences	230,420	230,420	229,575	226,808
C0599	Service Support Costs	110,393	110,393	114,960	112,890
	Admin of Group and Private Installations	110,393	110,393	114,960	112,890
C0601	Technical Design and Supervision	555,274	555,274	233,278	263,278
C0699	Service Support Costs	259,161	259,161	129,051	94,245
	Support to Water Capital Programme	814,435	814,435	362,329	357,523
C0701	Agency & Recoupable Service	296,632	296,632	0	5,131
C0799	Service Support Costs	185,763	185,763	6,231	136,429
	Agency & Recoupable Services	482,395	482,395	6,231	141,560
	Service Division Total	18,978,159	18,978,159	14,438,747	14,432,224

WATER SERVICES				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
Environment, Community and Local Government	30,000	30,000	377,993	178,778
Other	0	0	25,000	25,000
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	30,000	30,000	402,993	203,778
Goods and Services				
Commercial Water	0	0	2,100,164	2,100,000
Commercial Waste Water	0	0	2,451,076	2,451,076
Superannuation	155,502	155,502	140,618	140,618
Local Authority Contributions	0	0	5,332,522	5,332,522
Other income	18,494,876	18,494,876	35,600	170,896
Total Goods and Services (b)	18,650,378	18,650,378	10,059,980	10,195,112
Total Income c=(a+b)	18,680,378	18,680,378	10,462,973	10,398,890

Division D – Development Management

This is a diverse division which takes in the Planning function and expands to the broader economic development remit as well as local development activity under the County Development Board remit.

Forward Planning

The Forward Planning Unit undertakes the preparation of statutory development plans and local area plans for the local authorities within County Louth and additional planning guidance documents and strategies. It also provides input into the work of other sections throughout the local authority.

This year saw a number of projects progressing including:

- An Urban Design Framework Plan for Drogheda Heritage Quarters.
- The completion of walking and cycling strategies for both Drogheda and Ardee.
- The successful variation of the Dundalk and Environs Plan 2009-2015 to accommodate the Ashling Park regeneration scheme in Dundalk.
- The preparation, in consultation with the local community, of a Village Design Statement for Omeath.
- The initiation of the review of the County Development Plan.

In 2014 work on the review of the County Development Plan will continue with the development of a number of strategies:

- Louth Green Infrastructure Strategy
- Retail strategy for County Louth
- Housing Strategy

In addition there will be a major consultation exercise with the elected members, statutory agencies and the public, in order to inform the new development plan, which is to be completed in 2015.

Planning Applications

There were 717 planning applications received from 1st January 2013 to 25th November 2013, of which 621 were valid. Of the total number of applications received by the Council the following is a breakdown of application numbers by local authority with 2012 figures for comparison purposes:

	2012	2013
Drogheda Borough Council	88	92
Louth County Council	535	498

Dundalk Town Council.	124	127
Total	747	717

Of the 537 planning decisions made within the period, 504 (94%) were granted and 33 (6%) were refused. The discrepancy between the number of decisions made, 537, and the number of valid applications, 621, is accounted for by applications where a request for further information has issued.

The Development Management Section for Louth Local Authorities was restructured in November 2011 and all planning applications for the three planning authorities are being processed centrally in County Hall. In addition the Dundalk Town Council Planning Section relocated to County Hall in September 2013.

The amount of levies collected from 1st January 2013 to 25th November 2013 was €920,228.46, a decrease of approximately 25% from the equivalent figure of €1,235,301 in 2012.

Planning Enforcement

From the 1st January 2013 to 25th November 2013, 175 Planning Enforcement complaints were received in the Enforcement Section. Of these, 84 have been closed along with a further 102 historic files.

The remaining cases are currently under review and engagement or enforcement action is continuing.

160 planning enforcement complaints were received in the same period in 2012.

The breakdown of complaints in 2013 is as follows:

Drogheda & Environs	26 complaints received of which 11 were closed.
Louth & Environs	106 complaints received of which 49 were closed.
Dundalk & Environs	43 complaints received of which 24 were closed.

Conservation

The Conservation Office provides continuing input into the protection of County Louth's Architectural Heritage through Development Management and Enforcement processes in accordance with the Development Plan. In addition advice and guidance is provided to owners of Protected Structures on appropriate maintenance and repair work. Similarly, advice and guidance was provided to voluntary groups on the legislative requirements in relation to Protected Structures, Architectural Conservation Areas and Monuments.

The structures at Risk Fund continued to successfully aid essential conservation work. The total grant fund for Co Louth in 2013 was €16,000 for two successful projects.

The Conservation Officer also provides reports to Louth Leader Partnership on the heritage criteria of projects seeking Leader funding.

Heritage

The overall aim for Louth's Heritage Office is to coordinate the conservation, management and sympathetic development of the county's heritage and to encourage community pride in and responsibility for this heritage.

Highlights in 2013 included:

'Action for Biodiversity' INTERREG project funding of a major regional biodiversity conference in Dundalk

Heritage Council funding for:

- Supporting the Louth Nature Trust's little tern wardening project.
- Biodiversity Enhancement Plans for Baltray, Greenore and Reaghstown Tidy Towns groups.
- Development of a downloadable Audio-Guide to Drogheda's Walls.

Economic Development

The Louth Economic Forum

The Louth Economic Forum was initiated in April 2009 and is chaired by Padraic White, former CEO of IDA Ireland. The Forum brings together all of the State agencies and the Business Community that interact with those generating economic activity in the county, and is a one-stop-shop for potential investors.

The Louth Economic Forum has devised an overall 10 POINT PLAN identifying 10 specific areas to be addressed within its work programme over a 5 year period. A task group has been established for each of the following areas:

- 1. Foreign Direct Investment 2. Sustainable Energy 3. Indigenous Industry**
- 4. Tourism and Heritage 5. Age-Friendly Business 6. Education & Training**
- 7. Agriculture Food and Fisheries 8. Broadband 9. Making Louth the Best County to do Business 10. Drogheda Dundalk Newry Economic Corridor**

To date, the following action plans have been published and are currently being implemented - Foreign Direct Investment, Indigenous Industry, Sustainable Energy, Tourism and Heritage, Age-Friendly Business, Education and Training and Agriculture Food & Fisheries. The Broadband Action Plan is also near completion. The remaining action plans will be published in 2014.

The Staff of the Economic Development Unit in Louth County Council are working with the members of the FDI companies and Indigenous Industry companies in partnership with the Development Agencies to attract new investment into the Region.

Jobs created in 2013

- PayPal – 1000 job industry for Dundalk
- Diaceutics – 20 job industry for Dundalk
- Radio Systems PetSafe Europe Ltd – 56 job industry for Dundalk
- Yapstone - 120 job industry for Drogheda
- Tesco – 70 additional jobs for Dundalk
- National Pen – 200 additional jobs for Dundalk

Memorandum of Understanding - between Louth Local Authorities and Newry & Mourne District Council

This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) sets out the detailed workings of the Strategic Alliance between Newry & Mourne District Council and Louth Local Authorities which will seek to support and promote the economic development and competitiveness of the region.

The key objectives of the Strategic Alliance are:

- To promote, strengthen and stimulate the social, cultural and economic links within and between the peoples of the region;
- To provide an enabling framework to promote the region more effectively for inward investment and open up further opportunities for the sharing of services and coordinated management of key resources;
- To consolidate the long-established working relationships between the Parties, positioning them on a strategic long-term footing, and with an outward looking focus;
- To coordinate core functions of the Parties in selected areas of co-operation;
- To enhance the leadership position of the Parties within the cross-border region and bolster their influencing and coordinating role for the benefit of the entire community;
- To develop links with other local authorities and regional stakeholders.

The **People's Panel** is an innovative cross-border project led by Newry & Mourne District Council where individual members of the public from North Louth and Newry & Mourne applied to join a Panel which met with Council officials to discuss a range of topics which were nominated by the panellists themselves.

Renewable Energy and Green Technology

Louth is well positioned to be a leader in sustainable energy and to create competitive edge as an economic development location by virtue of its approach to green business.

- **EU Concerto/Holistic – Sustainable Energy Zone - €3.5m**

The Holistic Project, now completed, was a collaborative approach to encourage public and private partners to be innovative in their approach to integrating sustainable energy practices and technologies. The total invested to date by all the Partners is the Sustainable Energy zone is €30m.

- **Smart Eco Hub - €986k**

The Smart Eco Hub received €986,000 from Interreg IVA and is a cluster of renewable/sustainable energy and clean technology companies which will work together to drive innovation and increase productivity, competitiveness, new business development, growth and job creation and at the same time address energy security and sustainability along the M1 Corridor.

- **The ISLES Project**

The ISLES (Irish–Scottish Links on Energy Study) is a project to facilitate the development of offshore renewable energy sources, such as wind, wave and tidal energy, and renewable energy trade between Scotland, Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland. Phase II to begin in 2014 with potential opportunities for the Region.

- **INDICATE Project - €2.9m**

EC FP7 funding of €2.9m in partnership with IES (Integrated Environmental Solutions Limited) and others, has been received to develop a decision making integrated smart urban planning tool which will include architectural master planning, detailed energy optimisation and environmental analysis.

- **Tellus Border Project - €4.1m**

The aim of the project which was completed in October 2013 is to deliver a seamless cross-border dataset and to interpret the geosciences data across the twelve northern counties of the Island of Ireland.

Tourism

Geo-Tourism - €1.65m

A unique geology destination of the Cooley Mountains, the Ring of Gullion across Carlingford Lough and into the Kingdom of Mourne and developing the Region as a major tourism destination. This project received funding of €1.65 million from Interreg and the Project Team has been appointed.

Sustainable Economic Growth

East Border Region Projects

The Council supports a number of projects receiving funding through INTERREG:-

- The PLATO programme, which has received **€664k** and is a mentoring programme for Business.
- The Life Sciences programme received **€508k**. This is a cluster/network of companies in the pharmaceutical and life sciences sector.
- The ASPIRE Programme received **€1.749m** and is a business improvement programme for graduates.
- The IOTA Innovation Programme received **€850k** will assist people who have a new product/business idea.

Peace III Programme

The preparatory work and subsequent implementation of the Peace III Phase II Louth Peace and Reconciliation Plan began in the autumn of 2011. The four strategic priorities form the Action Plan are:-

1. Consolidation of Peace Building among our Young People. (€396,000- 5 Projects)
2. Building the Capacity of Peace 111 Target Groups (€1m – 4 Projects plus 10 Small Grant projects and 1 Shared Space Capital Project)
3. Celebrating the Diverse Community in Louth (€342,000 – 3 Projects)
4. Facilitating Community dialogue and relationship building (€348, 0000- 5 Projects)

Young people were given a wide range of opportunities to reflect on the impact of conflict and the importance of dialogue, collaboration and respect for the views of others. The Aftermath Project has been widely acclaimed for its honest engagement with people directly affected by the Conflict in Northern Ireland and its inclusion of immigrant survivors of recent conflicts. The completion of Wellington Hall will provide a focal point for maintaining good relations developed throughout this phase of Peace 111. The appointment of the Network manager was a key element to assist community groups that were not targeting funding but were victims of the troubles.

Challenge for Change

The Challenge of Change programme is one of the strategic priorities of the Peace III Southern Partnership. It is dedicated to addressing issues around overt and covert racism with a particular emphasis on raising awareness of cultural diversity, myth-busting and increasing contact, integration and inclusion.

Business Support Unit

The Business Support Unit promotes encourages and fosters business and entrepreneurship and innovation in the County, working in particular with indigenous businesses that do not interact with State Support Agencies and provides a One Stop Shop for new businesses in Louth including liaison with the planning service, funding agencies, etc.

It maintains and updates a dedicated web site that allows the public / business to interface with the Business Support Unit acting as a 'One Stop Shop for "Doing Business in Louth" and showcasing Louth as a "Pro Business County" www.louthcoco.ie/en/Services/Business_Support_Unit/

Business Support Unit – Highlights 2013:

- Jobs /Advice Fairs were held in Dundalk and Drogheda.
- Age Friendly Business Consumer and Cross Border Business Expos as well as a Tourism Conference.
- Tourism Signature Projects - Táin March and Thomas D'Arcy McGee International Summer School, Carlingford.
- Food Promotion including a "Taste of Louth" and National Potato Day.
- Over 100 events under the auspices delivery of "The Gathering" in Louth - 34 of which received financial assistance from the Gathering Fund.
- 3 Flagship Events - National Leprechaun Hunt, Drogheda Samba Festival, Land of Legends Nautical Event.

2014 Actions

The Business Support Unit will be incorporated into the LEO – Local Enterprise Office in 2014 when the County Enterprise Boards are dissolved and the local authority moves to the forefront of business advice provision. It is anticipated that this move will consolidate efforts and provide a more comprehensive and integrated service to business. A sample of actions proposed for 2014 are set out below:-

- Public Procurement seminars in Dundalk and Drogheda
- Delivery of 3rd National Tourism Conference in Ballymascanlon House Hotel, Dundalk emphasis on the Destination Marketing of the county

- Delivery of 3rd Louth Age Friendly Business Consumer Expo / Fair in Ardee.
- Promote Louth as a Business Friendly County for all indigenous industry to include the Food / Agricultural sector.
- Support product and service opportunities for an ageing society in conjunction with Netwell/ CASALA in DkIT.
- The delivery of the Tourism & Heritage Forum Signature Projects and Action Plan to include:
 - o Táin March June 2014.
 - o Thomas D’Arcy McGee International Summer School, Carlingford.
 - o Food Promotion to include a “Taste of Louth” in Dundalk.

Louth County Development Board

The work of the CDB continues in supporting its sub- committees, forums and working groups.

In particular, this section is involved in supporting and developing the workplans of

- The Louth Community and Voluntary Forum
- The Louth Age Friendly County initiative
- Comhairle na nÓg
- The Social Inclusion unit- DDAG initiatives, Sensory smoke alarm scheme
- The Dundalk and Drogheda RAPID programme
- The People’s Panel – Cross border pilot initiative
- The Local Sports Partnership

The County Development Board structure will cease in 2014 and the new Local Community Development Committees will be established. These Committees will align local development and local authority community structures and activity and create a mechanism for the enhancement of services through consolidated planning. The structures operating under the CDB will be reviewed in this context. However, as well as highlighting the learning and good practice from the CDB the following priority actions will continue:-

- Roll out the **Targeted Social Inclusion** programmes - Sensory smoke alarm scheme, harm reduction/family support- Drug initiatives.
- Continue to support the work programmes of the **Dundalk and Drogheda RAPID Programme**, area implementation team.
- Continue to support the work programmes of **Comhairle na nÓg**.
- Build on the success of the **Peoples Panel** initiative.
- Continue to support the Community & Voluntary Forum.

Highlights of 2013

Louth Age Friendly County

Louth is a national leader as an age friendly county and projects initiated in this county have been significant in the context of the national programme.

- Louth Age Friendly County joined with a number of other Irish Partners, most notably University College Cork to form COLLAGE and won **3 Stars as a Reference Site in the European Innovation Programme for Healthy & Active Ageing**.
- The **Age Friendly Transport Working Group** has had some great success with its new pilot scheme based in Clogherhead:
 - With the very welcome cooperation of Bus Eireann the bus journey from Clogherhead to the Lourdes Hospital in Drogheda has been made easier.
 - Work is also progressing well on a new voluntary transport scheme to match those needing lifts to Drogheda, doctors, etc with those making journeys with empty space in their cars.
- As part of our commitments to the European Healthy & Active Ageing Programme, Louth has led on the establishment of a **Regional Older Peoples Forum and Age Friendly Alliance** covering Louth, Monaghan, Meath, Fingal and Newry & Mourne. The first meetings of both groups took place during 2013.

Objectives for 2014

Age Friendly County

- **Transport**
 - Build on the work in Clogherhead to bring real improvements in existing transport services that impact on the lives of individual older persons
 - Ensure that the introduction of the Regional Transport Coordination Role is fully exploited to improve levels of service and accessibility to public transport throughout County Louth.
- To examine Council buildings, car parks and facilities and commence an audit from an Age Friendly perspective.
- **Healthy & Active Ageing European Programme** - to maximise opportunities to exchange and learn from examples of good practice from throughout Europe to fully capitalise on our status as a 3 Star Reference Site.

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
D0101	Statutory Plans and Policy	598,500	598,500	654,235	600,000
D0199	Service Support Costs	299,106	299,106	297,387	282,957
	Forward Planning	897,606	897,606	951,622	882,957
D0201	Planning Control	1,059,234	1,059,234	618,270	560,000
D0299	Service Support Costs	499,246	499,246	509,814	485,076
	Development Management	1,558,480	1,558,480	1,128,084	1,045,076
D0301	Enforcement Costs	351,629	351,629	340,480	340,480
D0399	Service Support Costs	180,427	180,427	181,540	172,731
	Enforcement	532,056	532,056	522,020	513,211
D0403	Management of & Contris to Other Commercial Facs	41,830	41,830	119,789	119,800
	Industrial and Commercial Facilities	41,830	41,830	119,789	119,800
D0501	Tourism Promotion	109,179	109,179	167,135	163,618
D0599	Service Support Costs	56,569	56,569	61,890	58,887
	Tourism Development and Promotion	165,748	165,748	229,025	222,505
D0601	General Community & Enterprise Expenses	282,444	282,444	295,342	284,118
D0602	RAPID Costs	0	0	128,630	31,864
D0603	Social Inclusion	41,142	41,142	77,615	43,324
D0699	Service Support Costs	188,824	188,824	191,609	182,312
	Community and Enterprise Function	512,410	512,410	693,196	541,618
D0701	Unfinished Housing Estates	201,000	201,000	8,900	290,806
D0799	Service Support Costs	3,879	3,879	4,115	3,915
	Unfinished Housing Estates	204,879	204,879	13,015	294,721
D0801	Building Control Inspection Costs	132,473	132,473	99,705	107,455
D0802	Building Control Enforcement Costs	8,400	8,400	5,000	4,000
D0899	Service Support Costs	60,126	60,126	58,760	55,909
	Building Control	200,999	200,999	163,465	167,364

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
D0905	Economic Development & Promotion	2,571,904	2,571,904	2,274,062	1,978,833
D0999	Service Support Costs	297,479	297,479	281,421	267,766
	Economic Development and Promotion	2,869,383	2,869,383	2,555,483	2,246,599
D1001	Property Management Costs	417	417	0	417
D1099	Service Support Costs	0	0	0	10
	Property Management	417	417	0	427
D1101	Heritage Services	121,802	121,802	166,314	114,447
D1102	Conservation Services	32,136	32,136	31,631	30,848
D1103	Conservation Grants	23,000	23,000	18,000	16,000
D1199	Service Support Costs	53,690	53,690	53,949	51,331
	Heritage and Conservation Services	230,628	230,628	269,894	212,626
D1201	Agency & Recoupable Service	0	0	0	431,413
	Agency & Recoupable Services	0	0	0	431,413
	Service Division Total	7,214,436	7,214,436	6,645,593	6,678,319

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
Environment, Community and Local Government	67,142	67,142	122,315	61,000
Other	2,162,932	2,162,932	1,875,292	1,787,840
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	2,230,074	2,230,074	1,997,607	1,848,840
Goods and Services				
Planning Fees	205,700	205,700	280,350	180,000
Sale/Leasing of other property/Industrial Sites	12,915	12,915	14,415	12,915
Superannuation	154,982	154,982	140,148	140,148
Local Authority Contributions	913,767	913,767	564,823	564,823
Other income	210,764	210,764	286,150	584,220
Total Goods and Services (b)	1,498,128	1,498,128	1,285,886	1,482,106
Total Income c=(a+b)	3,728,202	3,728,202	3,283,493	3,330,946

Division E – Environmental Services

Waste Management

Following the realignment of the Waste Regions and the reduction in the number of Waste Management regions from ten to three, Louth County Council is now part of the more expansive East & Midlands Waste Management Region. The Region consists of 12 counties and this Council will work with other constituent local authorities towards the preparation and adoption of a Waste Management Plan for the period 2014-2019. Dublin City Council is the lead authority for the new region and the preparation a new Waste Management Plan for the Region is already underway, to comply with the new Waste Framework Directive.

Recycling

2013 continued to see excellent results in terms of recycling in county Louth. The Table below details quantities of Glass, Cans and Plastics recovered and recycled from January 2011 until 31st October 2013.

Material	2011 (Jan-Dec) (Tonnes)	2012 (Jan-Dec) (Tonnes)	2013 (Jan-Oct) (Tonnes)
Glass	1728	1658	1633
Cans	74	76	67
Plastics	299	268	216

Waste minimisation and recycling initiatives were undertaken in partnership with Tidy Towns groups and Schools throughout the county.

The introduction of the brown bin in accordance with the Food Waste Regulations in both Drogheda and Dundalk has not been as successful as anticipated with a low participation of the scheme particularly in the Drogheda area. Despite an extensive promotional campaign in both the press and on local radio, the participation levels are poor and will need to be addressed. The Council staff is currently engaged with the waste contractors with a view to publicizing the brown bin campaign and the legal requirement of householders to refrain from putting food waste in the black bin. Significant progress has been made in November 2013 and the overall household brown bin participation rate in Dundalk and Drogheda has increased to over 30%. Efforts will be made to persuade non compliant householders to change their ways but ultimately the Council may have to resort to enforcement measures.

The innovative 'Trashion' Fashion event and Make a Can Sculpture competition for secondary school students in association with Tidy Towns groups has again proved successful with fantastic displays in both.

While the operation and maintenance of bring bank facilities continues to be difficult and costly, a decision has not been made on a reduction in the number of plastic bottles bring banks. Given that these are accepted in the kerbside collection and at the three Recycling Centres in the county, the need for Brink Banks also will be assessed this year. Such an initiative would reduce the carbon footprint associated with servicing the sites as well as reducing the cost of recycling.

As advised last year the operation and management of the recycling centres in both Drogheda and Dundalk were bundled as one contract this year and the existing operator has been successful and with a reduced cost to the Council. This tender will be administered by Louth County Council, but without a reduction in the quality of the service provided. However, the saving achieved is somewhat diluted following a reduction in the subsidy payable from 50% to 33%.

Litter Management

The County Litter Warden Team continued to enforce the Litter Pollution Act with noted success and Louth remains one of the top performers in the country for litter management. There were 216 litter fines and 12 court prosecutions for litter offences to date (Jan-Nov) in 2013. There were 108 complaints received to date in 2013 concerning unauthorized waste dumping and 6 court prosecutions in relation to same in 2013. However, the level of illegal dumping continues to rise and in many cases prosecution of cases presents difficulties for the Wardens due to the absence of adequate evidence. However, the public can assist the Council in tackling this issue by using the Lo Call Litter Hotline 1800 202606 to report such illegal activities. The Council spends a significant amount in cleaning up the debris from illegal dumping/littering. The cost of these clean ups in 2013 amounts to €13,000 which equates to 17 additional Amenity Grants. The Council would much rather spend its diminishing funds in a more productive fashion.

Partnerships have been established with community groups who adopt certain areas for litter management purposes and the small grant provided to these volunteers represents excellent value for money and achieves a high cleanliness rating.

National Spring Clean was hugely successful in the county again this year with approximately 200 events held, the most high profile of which was a clean-up of Exit 14 of the M1 which saw Tidy Towns volunteers from the Border to the Boyne give voluntarily of their time to clean a major litter black spot on Good Friday. It is estimated that this event saved the Council in excess of €7000 as a result of the voluntary manpower provided and it is hoped to repeat the exercise in 2014. It is hoped to tackle Exit 14 & 15 in 2014 based on the high number of volunteers who attended this year.

Tidy Towns

2013 has been another extremely successful year for Tidy Towns development in Louth with the county being awarded four Gold Medals, one Silver Medal and one Bronze Medal in the National Tidy Towns Competition. Louth is one of only three counties to achieve four gold medals in this year's competition. The Network, Louth Tidy Towns Together continued to operate effectively during the year. The partnership approach in sharing ideas and mentoring less experienced groups is working very effectively. The Tidy Towns Development budget provided by Louth County Council provides value for money in that it is distributed to Tidy Towns groups where external funding has been sourced for village enhancement/tidy Towns Projects and the contribution assists with the local match funding requirement.

The Louth Looking Good awards were again organised and coordinated by Louth Tidy Towns Together in 2013.

Green Schools

At the end of November 2013 the County proudly flies 80 Green Flags in schools, including the first pre-school, which now means that Louth has Green Flags from pre-school right through to Third level. Louth is the first County to achieve this status and demonstrates excellent litter and waste management programmes throughout the entire education system. Many of these schools have also completed the energy, water, travel and biodiversity modules of the Green Flag programme depending on the length of time they have been involved in the scheme. Locally, the Primary School Awards Scheme was a huge success once again this year with all participants demonstrating increased recycling and improved cleanliness ratings as well as reductions in black bin waste and energy and water usage.

Blue Flag Beaches

While beach management can be difficult, Louth County Council in partnership with local communities, succeeded in retaining the prestigious Blue Flag for its beaches at Templetown, Port and Clogherhead in 2013. The ongoing partnership with local community groups in particular, Clogherhead Development Group and Port Beach Development group, must be highlighted as a very successful value for money initiative where local community volunteers assist with manpower in meeting the requirements of Blue Flag status.

Whiteriver Landfill Site

Whiteriver Landfill Site is licensed to take 96,000 tonnes of waste per annum. The site ceased importation of municipal waste at end of August 2013, and will cease importation of all waste in early 2014, upon completion of Phase 5 part of the site. The Council plans to carry out a final site capping and restoration works project in

2014 at a cost of approx. €1.0M. Subsequent to site closure, it will be necessary to carry out a site aftercare and monitoring programme for at least 30 years. The closure of the landfill has an impact on the income in the revenue budget.

The Council has constructed an energy recovery facility from landfill gas generated at the site. Electrical power from the proposed plant will be exported to the National Grid. The completion of electricity grid connection to the site by ESB Networks is expected to occur in early 2014, when the export of electricity to the national grid will commence.

Water Framework Directive

County Louth is located within two river basin districts:-

- 1) The Eastern River Basin District
- 2) The Neagh Bann River Basin District.

River Basin Managements Plans for both river basin districts were adopted by the Council for the period 2009 to 2015. These plans are designed to implement the objectives of the E.U. Water Framework Directive, 2000. The principal objectives of the river basin management plans are:-

- Prevent deterioration of water body status.
- Restore good status to water bodies.
- Achieve protected areas objectives.
- Reduce chemical pollution of water bodies.

A key element of the River Basin Management Plans is implementation of sets of management measures designed to address the significant water management issues in each river basin (diffuse and point pollution sources from industries, waste water treatment plants, septic tanks, farmyards, slurry and fertilizer land spreading, etc.). Restoring good status to water bodies is to be generally achieved by 2015 where this is technically feasible, environmentally sustainable and not disproportionately expensive to do so.

Enforcement

The Council continues to actively enforce the provisions of all environmental legislation as required by statute. Enforcement includes inspections to determine compliance with Producer Responsibility legislation, including the Plastic Bag Levy, Farm Plastics Levy, End of Life Vehicles, WEEE, Packaging, Batteries and Tyre Regulations. Audits of waste permitted facilities, waste collection permit holders, and effluent discharge licences are also completed as well as road checkpoints in conjunction with An Garda Síochána. Complaints continue to be received and investigated with legal proceedings initiated where appropriate.

In 2013 illegal diesel laundering activities in the county continued at a high level. 510 Tonnes of diesel laundering waste have been recovered from 1st January 2013 until 30th November 2013. This is a reduction of 29 Tonnes in respect of the same period in 2012. To date in 2013 expenditure incurred on work associated with the handling and disposal of hazardous wastes from illegal diesel laundering activities is €680,000. As advised last year a new contractor has been appointed at a considerably lower rate than previously. This is reflected in the lower outturn in the budget and the costs are fully recoupable from DECLG.

Energy

Energy is still a major focus for the Local Authority, as the County continues to maintain the ISO 14001 standard and continues to progress towards the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan 2009-2020 which will require a 20% reduction in energy consumption. In 2013 the Energy team was rejuvenated, with membership drawn from across Louth Local Authorities. Louth County Council was audited by external auditors from the UK this year, in relation to its ISO 14001 and was successful in retaining the standard.

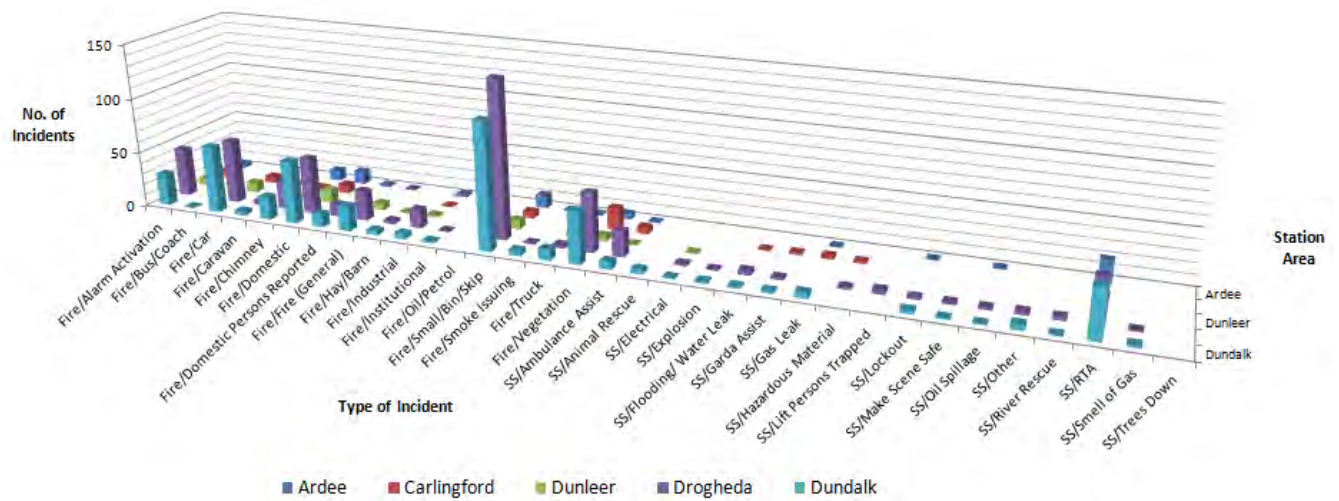
Emergency Services

In the Emergency Service arena, we are now over 12 months into the new roster model. The Table below indicates the volume of activity in the first year of operation of the system. The adoption of the Section 85 Agreement between the original 3 fire authorities has given us the opportunity to have a robust model of service delivery, with measurable training and work programmes delivered and quicker response times to incidents, achieved. The table below illustrates the first twelve months of delivery of this model.

Louth Mobilisations by Appliance (Class B & Emergency Tender): Sept 12 - Sept 13

	Ardee	Carlingford	Dunleer	Drogheda			Dundalk			Total
	LH11A1	LH12A1	LH13A1	LH14A1	LH14A2	LH14B1	LH15A1	LH15A2	LH15B1	
	(Pump)	(Pump)	(Pump)	(Pump)	(Pump)	(Emergency Tender)	(Pump)	(Pump)	(Emergency Tender)	
No. of Mobilisations (1st Turnout Area)	96	57	76	510	83	38	416	101	41	1418
No. of Mobilisations (Other Turnout Areas)	64	15	73	46	1	20	40	5	9	273
Total Mobilisations	160	72	149	556	84	58	456	106	50	1691
<i>Mobilisations to Co. Meath</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>89</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>97</i>

Louth Co Council Fire & Rescue: Incidents By Station Area & Type 03rd Sept 2012 - 02nd Sept 2013



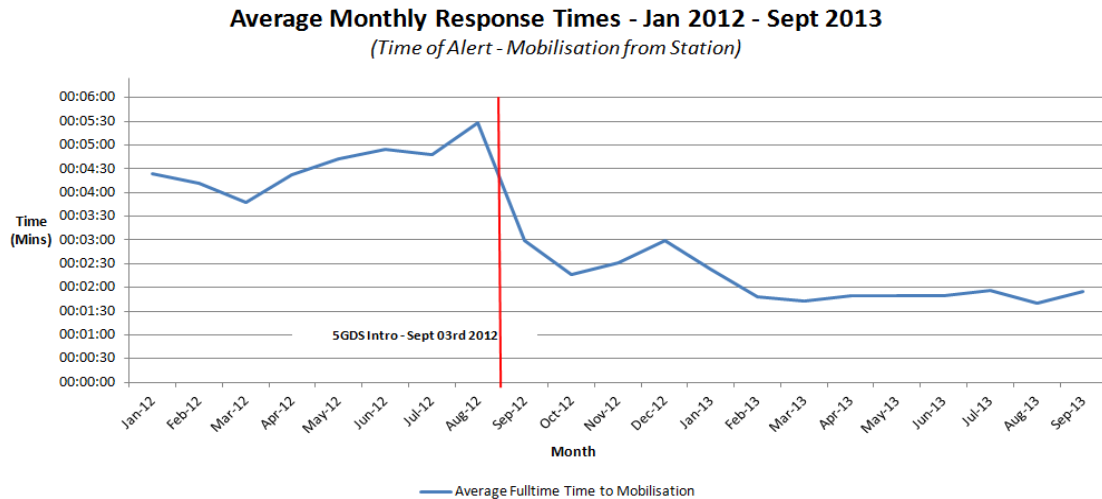
The first year of operation has also given us the opportunity to analyse all aspects of the changed service, and the table below illustrates the improvements achieved including financial and performance.

Dundalk & Drogheda Fire - System Comparison (Pre and Post 03rd Sept 2013)

		Previous System (1992 - 2012)	Current System (2012 -)
System		5 shifts of 3 FT, 5 day manning FT, 16 retained	4 shifts of 7 FT, 8 retained
No. of Staff <i>Drogheda + Dundalk</i>	Fulltime	40	55
	Retained	32	16
Average Working Week	Fulltime	39 hours	39 hours
	Retained	84 hours (70.25 on call + 13.75 watchroom)	126 hours (on call only)
Average Turnout Times 1st Appliance	09.00 - 18.00	3.8 mins	2.04 mins
	18.00 - 23.00	3.6 mins	
	23.00 - 09.00	4.1 mins	
Estimated Pay Costs <i>Drogheda + Dundalk</i>	Total	€4,176,231.35	€3,989,213.00
	Saving (vs current)	-	€187,018.35
On-Station Productivity	Working	358	525
	Stand-down	581	315
Indicators	Response Times	Unpredictable	Current 1.55 mins FT
	Operational Preparedness	All Equipment Maintenance carried out	All Equipment Maintenance carried out
	Training Off Roster	700 - 800 Person Days per annum	700 - 800 Person Days per annum
	Training FT (Drill)	< 50 hrs per annum per person	250 - 300 hrs per annum per person
	Training Retained (Drill)	70 - 80 hrs per annum	70 - 80 hrs per annum
	H&S Programme	Not enough time	More Time
	Pre-Incident Planning	< 20 per annum per station	121 Dundalk, 116 Drogheda Completed (Sept 12 - Sept 13)
	Hydrant Inspections	Varied (<100 per annum)	>750 in both Dundalk and Drogheda (Sept 12 - Sept 13)
	Community Fire Safety	Varied. Schools Visits and ad hoc Community Fire Safety events carried out	Approx 200 hrs per station per annum alloted (not yet fully used). Policy introduced Q4 2013
	On Station Continuity	Poor (for on station work)	Good
	On Station Productivity	Very large proportion of stand- down time	Increase from 38% - 62% of time
	Fire Fee Costs	Fire fees for almost all turnouts	None for single appliance turnouts 24/7

Notes: Need to maintain min of 5 on station to provide 1-2 min response.
 Need to maintain min of 5 on call to provide 5-6 min response
 Stand-down: Personnel at rest on station - not available for on station work (includes meal t

The improvement in the mobilisation times to incidents is vividly shown in the chart below, showing pre and post implementation of the new system.



Provision has also been made to deliver a Community Fire Safety Programme in the county. This matter has already been brought to the Housing Strategic Policy Committee and will see a formal strategy been brought to Council early in the New Year. The strategy in its review of national and local data, will point to trends with regard to fire fatalities in the home and detail actions that will see crews delivering Home Safety Fire Checks, to risk groups. Other actions to work with the Community will contribute to the goal, of a reduction in fire deaths in Louth.

There is also an increased provision in the 2014 budget with regard to fleet maintenance. This arises as there is no current national allocation for appliances and therefore fleet maintenance costs are increasing. We have however been mitigating this factor by investing in a significant Preventative Maintenance Programme which operates on the following model

- Full 13 week check on all vehicle aspects
- Annual Inspection and Service of all components
- 8 Year/200,000 km Major Overhaul including Parts Replacement on Preventative Basis.

The service will be further enhanced nationally during the course of 2014, with a publication of a review of station boundaries based on historic analysis of travel times. The implications for Louth is that it is likely to recommend some changes to station boundaries within the county and also with regard to services provided by Louth for other adjoining counties. Once the inter county changes are agreed they will be formalised with agreements between the respective Fire Authorities.

In the other emergency areas, Louth continues to maintain a robust Major Emergency Management response to any incident that arises in the county. In 2013, a coastal pollution exercise was held which involved all partner organisations in that particular area and that proved to be a particular learning exercise.

Civil Defence continues to provide a vital support to the Community and was involved a large number of public events and also activations for various searches for missing persons during the course of the year. Arising from this type of continued requests for assistance, training and exercises in 2014 are going to be directed to this area.

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
E0101	Landfill Operations	10,000	10,000	3,672,000	2,335,110
E0199	Service Support Costs	240,326	240,326	291,187	281,383
	Landfill Operation and Aftercare	250,326	250,326	3,963,187	2,616,493
E0201	Recycling Facilities Operations	524,500	524,500	434,500	434,500
E0204	Other Recycling Services	4,400	4,400	2,000	4,400
E0299	Service Support Costs	66,596	66,596	68,759	67,614
	Recovery & Recycling Facilities Operations	595,496	595,496	505,259	506,514
E0301	Waste to Energy Facilities Operations	26,000	26,000	8,900	9,200
E0399	Service Support Costs	4,005	4,005	3,843	3,657
	Waste to Energy Facilities Operations	30,005	30,005	12,743	12,857
E0501	Litter Warden Service	150,150	150,150	150,000	108,150
E0502	Litter Control Initiatives	140,400	140,400	155,000	155,590
E0599	Service Support Costs	327,456	327,456	318,083	305,748
	Litter Management	618,006	618,006	623,083	569,488
E0601	Operation of Street Cleaning Service	200,000	200,000	200,000	200,000
E0699	Service Support Costs	75,103	75,103	71,085	58,128
	Street Cleaning	275,103	275,103	271,085	258,128
E0701	Monitoring of Waste Regs (incl Private Landfills)	372,000	372,000	344,980	377,575
E0702	Enforcement of Waste Regulations	7,200	7,200	13,200	3,700
E0799	Service Support Costs	152,800	152,800	152,707	143,394
	Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement	532,000	532,000	510,887	524,669
E0801	Waste Management Plan	115,000	115,000	132,460	88,000
E0899	Service Support Costs	52,969	52,969	53,264	50,679
	Waste Management Planning	167,969	167,969	185,724	138,679
E0901	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	125,070	125,070	124,070	130,800
E0999	Service Support Costs	5,092	5,092	2,987	2,842
	Maintenance and Upkeep of Burial Grounds	130,162	130,162	127,057	133,642
E1001	Operation Costs Civil Defence	117,019	117,019	119,943	70,500
E1002	Dangerous Buildings	1,000	1,000	5,000	20,381
E1004	Derelict Sites	16,000	16,000	15,000	0
E1005	Water Safety Operation	72,750	72,750	67,150	67,289
E1099	Service Support Costs	40,562	40,562	42,451	40,391
	Safety of Structures and Places	247,331	247,331	249,544	198,561

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
E1101	Operation of Fire Brigade Service	5,522,886	5,522,886	5,511,005	5,833,772
E1199	Service Support Costs	590,734	590,734	656,516	695,217
	Operation of Fire Service	6,113,620	6,113,620	6,167,521	6,528,989
E1201	Fire Safety Control Cert Costs	200,543	200,543	242,210	237,747
E1299	Service Support Costs	110,655	110,655	109,425	104,115
	Fire Prevention	311,198	311,198	351,635	341,862
E1301	Water Quality Management	1,147,500	1,147,500	929,165	1,137,714
E1302	Licensing and Monitoring of Air and Noise Quality	3,200	3,200	9,300	2,100
E1399	Service Support Costs	156,210	156,210	151,765	144,401
	Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution	1,306,910	1,306,910	1,090,230	1,284,215
	Service Division Total	10,578,126	10,578,126	14,057,955	13,114,097

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
Environment, Community and Local Government	1,321,800	1,321,800	1,001,675	1,143,475
Defence	90,000	90,000	75,000	85,040
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	1,411,800	1,411,800	1,076,675	1,228,515
Goods and Services				
Landfill Charges	0	0	4,515,000	3,006,956
Fire Charges	380,250	380,250	423,000	380,000
Superannuation	122,193	122,193	110,498	110,498
Local Authority Contributions	4,470,880	4,470,880	4,346,273	4,346,273
Other income	267,430	267,430	362,176	118,776
Total Goods and Services (b)	5,240,753	5,240,753	9,756,947	7,962,503
Total Income c=(a+b)	6,652,553	6,652,553	10,833,622	9,191,018

Division F – Recreation and Amenity

Library Services

Registered library members in Louth have been retained this year at 17,000, with a total of 239,000 visits to three fulltime branch libraries and over 440,000 items borrowed during the year.

During 2013 the County Louth Mobile Library Service revised its timetable to include further housing estates in Drogheda and Ardee, along with providing a stop every Friday afternoon in the Abbey Centre Carpark Drogheda, during refurbishment works to Drogheda Library. The County Louth Schools Library Service continues to support 77 primary schools in the County, as well as calling to local crèches.

Branch Development

Louth County Council was successful in receiving a grant-aid of €250,000 for the refurbishment and upgrade of Drogheda Library from the Department's Capital Funding Programme for Public Libraries. It is envisaged that the new upgraded library will enhance services to the public by including RFID self-issue service points/kiosks; additional computer points and WIFI access; a new multi functional seminar/ICT room and enhanced junior and teenage sections of the library. The upgrade and redesign of Drogheda Library will attract new customers, give an enhanced facility to them and allow us to plan for further innovative technologies and services including an 'Open Library' facility, with extended opening hours to the public.

County Wide Library Initiatives

eBooks and eAudio Service

A new service of eBooks was launched during the summer from Overdrive, a US based provider of eBooks. This service along with the eAudio downloads service allows library members to browse the collection from home and download items to their computer, iPhone, iPad or other tablet device.

Parent and Toddler Groups

Louth County Libraries secured funding through the Louth Childcare Committee to run a series of health information talks to parents, as part of the development of the Parent and Toddler Groups in both Dundalk and Ardee libraries.

Dundalk Europe Direct Information Centre

Louth County Libraries were awarded a second contract and associated funding from the European Commission to run a Europe Direct Information Centre in Dundalk Library from 2013-2017. The Centre focuses on the geographical region of Louth, Cavan and Monaghan and delivered in 2013 a varied programme of events which included the annual 'Europe Direct Soapbox' competition. Meabh Sloan from St. Vincent's Secondary School in Dundalk went on to win the overall national final in Dublin Castle in November 2013.

Drogheda Counts Project

Drogheda Library was involved in a numeracy literacy initiative in January/February 2013. The Library in co-operation with the Louth Leader Partnership, Home School Community Liaison, the VEC, RAPID and the Drogheda Leader produced a booklet called 'Drogheda Counts' with numeral and mathematical puzzles, which was distributed locally. The real success of the project was that around 1,250 students attended talks in the library over a four week period, with many students joining the library for the first time.

Anne Frank + You Exhibition

Louth County Libraries secured funding from the small grants programme of the County Louth Peace 111 partnership, to bring the highly acclaimed Anne Frank + You Exhibition to Dundalk Library in September 2013. Over 12,000 people viewed the exhibition and feedback received was very positive.

Local Studies: Genealogy Seminar

As part of the Gathering Ireland 2013 initiative, Dundalk Library held a Genealogy Seminar in the Reference Library. The seminar was well received with over ninety

attendees from various counties in Ireland, along with visitors from Australia, New Zealand, Canada and America.

Louth Field Names Project

Dr. Eve Campbell was appointed as Co-coordinator of the Louth Field Names Project during 2013. The project is collaboration between Louth County Libraries, County Louth Archaeological and Historical Society, Louth Irish Farmers Association and Louth County Council. Work is underway to upload the field names of county Louth to the database and to produce a booklet of the results. Recording the field names of county Louth will ensure that valuable local information is preserved for future generations.

Louth County Archives Service

Digitisation

The first phase of digitising the Grand Jury Query Books collection (1786 – 1899) was completed in July with the final phase due for completion in December 2013. The aim of the project is to facilitate easy access to the books, as some of them do not contain an index. The Grand Jury Query Books are one of the principal records of the county administration prior to 1898. They are a valuable resource as they detail the county infrastructure with many of the roads, bridges and piers still in use.

Acquisitions

During 2013 the Archives service acquired a number of important acquisitions including: archives relating to Collon Church of Ireland parish; legal documents relating to Dunleer as a municipal corporation in the 17th – 19th centuries; a rent book of Major Brush for the Brohatna estate in County Louth 1875-1918; research papers of the Byrne family of Allardstown; Stephenstown papers and various theses relating to the County.

Outreach Services

The County Archivist gave talks on the archives service and its collections to: a group from County Louth VEC in June; the Flood family reunion group as part of the Gathering Ireland in July; Louth County Libraries Genealogy Seminar in September and to participants on the local history course in the County Museum in November.

A full and varied programme of events will take place in Louth County Libraries in 2014. Some of the highlights this year included: 'Music for Life' programme held in Drogheda Library and 'Ardee as an Age-Friendly Town', a project held in Ardee Library in conjunction with An Garda Síochána, the Ardee Active Retirement Association and local primary schools.

As part of the inaugural Dundalk Book Festival, the Irish Film's Institute cinemobile rolled into town and was located in the Ramparts Carpark. The acclaimed '**Fighting Words**' creative writing workshops took place on the mobile with 250 school children attending over a four day period.

Cross Border Book Clubs

Two Book Clubs from Newry and Warrenpoint have been twinned with Dundalk and Ardee Libraries Book Club members to exchange views on their books and meet in the various cross border libraries for visits and social interaction. The avid readers are delighted with this initiative.

Library Service Indicators: January – September 2013

- Average number of opening hours per week for fulltime libraries: **38.25 hours per week**
- Average number of opening hours per week for part-time libraries: **19.65 hours per week**
- Number of fulltime libraries with lunchtime openings: **2**
- Number of fulltime libraries with evening openings: **3**
- Number of fulltime libraries with Saturday openings: **3**
- Total number of visits to fulltime libraries: **180,517**
- Annual expenditure on stock: **€145,000**
- Total number of books issued: **328,183**
- Total number of non-books issued: **28,066**
(including 1,064 e-Books and e-Audio Books)
- Total number of Internet sessions provided: **16,872**
(including 3,382 Wi-Fi sessions)

Arts Programme

The Arts Service fulfilled a packed schedule in 2013, some of which is detailed below.

Louth is served by three **youth theatres**, the members of whom meet weekly to workshop, learn, and devise theatre of many different styles. The Arts Service, as well as supporting the individual youth theatres, organised a one day seminar for youth theatre members and leaders throughout the county, in Drogheda, which proved valuable and enjoyable for all the participants. The County Arts Officer serves on the Board of the National Association for Youth Drama.

Drogheda Arts Festival, core funded by Drogheda Borough Council, cemented its growing reputation as one of the most innovative arts festivals in the country with a diverse and engaging programme over the May Bank Holiday Weekend. With performers and artists from the UK, the USA, and Italy, Drogheda became the centre of the arts in Ireland for the weekend.

Ardee Baroque, Ireland's only orchestral baroque music festival, celebrated its tenth birthday in November 2013 with a packed programme of concerts, recitals, workshops and lectures. Described by the Irish Times as "a music festival which could hold its head up anywhere", Ardee Baroque continues to attract enthusiastic audiences to the mid-Louth town. With the Irish Baroque Orchestra relocating to Ardee for the week preceding the performances, Ardee benefits from a financial, as well as a cultural, boost, supplemented by the growing number of overseas visitors to the festival. During Ardee Baroque, musicians visit every school in the town, performing music from the Baroque era, explaining the background to the music, and bringing the instruments, some over 250 years old into the schools, as well as community centres, and older people's day-care facilities.

In Dundalk, the **Creative Spark** continues to fulfil its two objectives of supporting the region's creative industries and using creative practice to promote social engagement. Creative Spark, which has been supported since its inception by Dundalk Town Council, increased its roster of creative industries renting its business units during 2013.

Classes and workshops in a wide range of creative media were also offered with one of the highlights being the Travellers' Stories Through Craft project and exhibition. The aim of this project was to bring Traveller women together to engage in the creative process as a means for self-expression and as a vehicle for expressing their identity to the wider community, thus promoting community integration and mutual understanding.

Droichead Arts Centre and Highlanes Gallery, both of which are financially supported by Drogheda Borough Council, offered artistic programmes which proved

stimulating, challenging, and innovative. These programmes, combined with both venues' on-going community and outreach work, have reinforced the perception of Louth as a county where the arts are valued and nurtured.

The Arts Service works closely with other cultural providers in the county, and is a founder partner of **Music Generation Louth**, along with Louth VEC, now Louth Meath Education and Training Board. Music Generation Louth works to make learning a musical instrument a realistic option for every young person in Louth. Tuition takes place in five venues throughout the county, and Music Generation Louth also offers opportunities for young people to perform in orchestras, string ensembles traditional groups, and rock bands. Thanks to support from Louth Local Authorities, young people can avail of high-quality, subsidised, music instrument tuition, through Music Generation Louth.

Other work included the administration of two rounds of CreateLouth funding, the development and maintenance of our website, www.createlouth.ie, the organisation of Bealtaine activities in day-care settings for older people in the county, events to mark All-Ireland Poetry Day, Love;Live Music Day, and Culture Night, and partnership with Louth Contemporary Music Society.

In 2014, the Arts Service will maintain the range and standard of services which have been in place in previous years. In addition, the development of the new governance and management structures in the Táin Theatre will lead, in 2014, to the emergence of a new Arts Centre in Dundalk, offering an integrated, multi-disciplinary programme of arts events and workshops. In addition, 2014 will see the return to Louth of Pipeworks, Ireland's only international organ competition, utilising the famous Willis organ in St. Patrick's, Dundalk, attracting competitors, performers and audiences from all over the world.

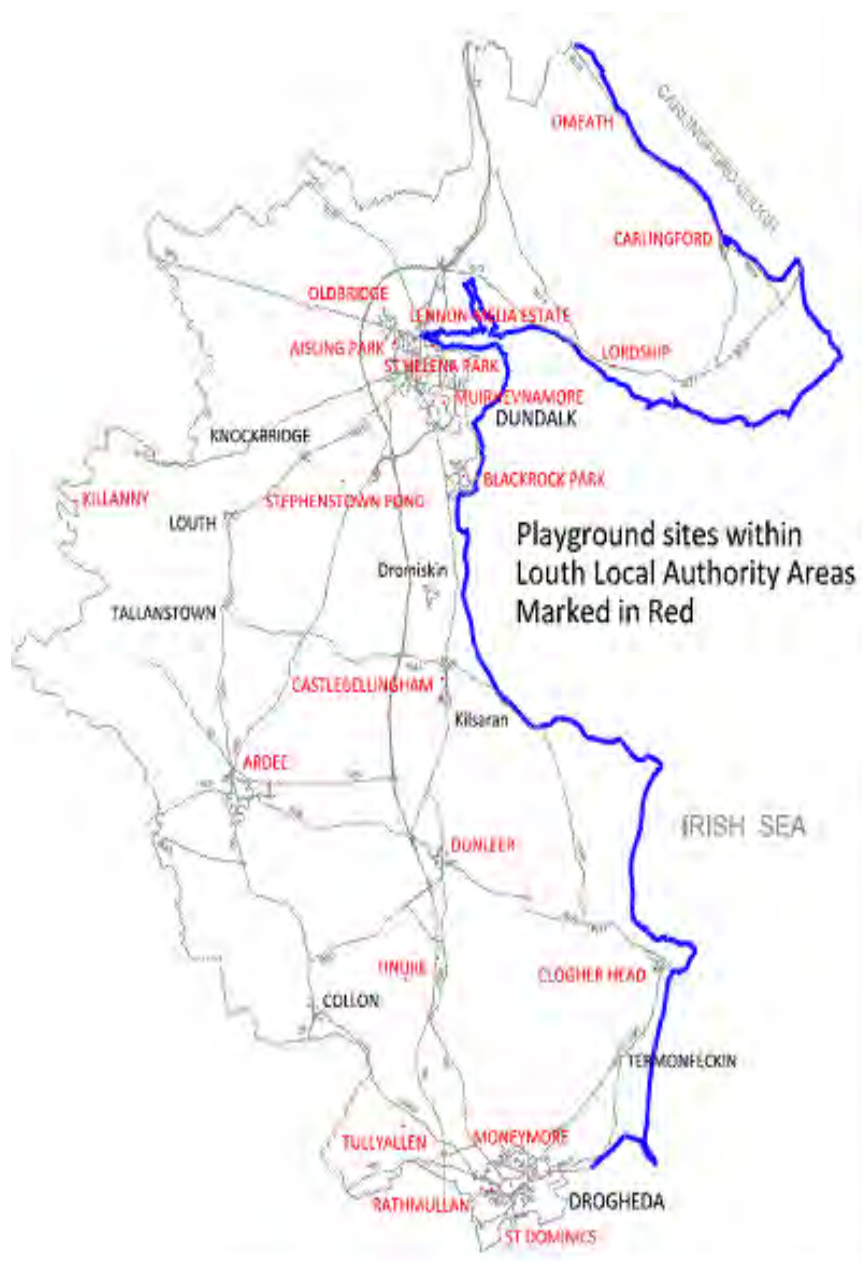
Community Playgrounds

Playgrounds are seen as a vital part of Community Planning Infrastructure and now number over 20 in the county. Any new installations are developed by communities who have sourced their own funding and local authorities take over the insurance and maintenance requirements. Such facilities are audited by Council staff on an ongoing basis and on some occasions in recent times, have had to be closed for a temporary basis to arrange repair. On other occasions individual pieces have had to be removed. The table below summarises these matters.

Number of Playground Repairs Undertaken	8
Number of Days Playgrounds closed due to necessary Repairs	14

Equally the Map below gives a good indication of the Playground facilities in the County and also indicates “the spread” of these facilities.

Playgrounds in Louth



Schools Development

The siting of schools is an integral element of the development of community infrastructure. Over the last 3 years the Council has been involved in this area. In some instances this has simply been the securing of sites such as at Blackrock and at the Marshes in Dundalk.

In other instances we have actually project managed the delivery of the schools. We are now managing the delivery of a 1,000 pupil secondary school at Ballymakenny Road, Drogheda. Construction will start in the Spring with a planned handover for September 2015. Similarly we have now also signed a Service Level Agreement to deliver an 8 classroom school complete with a Special Needs Unit in Ardee, which is also scheduled for Delivery in September 2015.

RECREATION & AMENITY					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
F0201	Library Service Operations	1,716,408	1,716,408	1,708,520	1,733,878
F0202	Archive Service	96,543	96,543	97,000	89,714
F0204	Purchase of Books, CD's etc.	150,000	150,000	145,000	145,000
F0205	Contributions to Library Organisations	21,590	21,590	23,215	21,590
F0299	Service Support Costs	820,832	820,832	809,225	769,959
	Operation of Library and Archival Service	2,805,373	2,805,373	2,782,960	2,760,141
F0302	Playgrounds	20,000	20,000	15,000	15,000
F0303	Beaches	47,000	47,000	46,500	46,500
F0399	Service Support Costs	4,646	4,646	3,608	3,433
	Outdoor Leisure Areas Operations	71,646	71,646	65,108	64,933
F0401	Community Grants	53,034	35,534	62,416	62,416
F0404	Recreational Development	110,000	110,000	102,310	119,065
F0499	Service Support Costs	88,188	88,188	85,873	81,706
	Community Sport and Recreational Development	251,222	233,722	250,599	263,187
F0501	Administration of the Arts Programme	188,600	188,600	194,364	194,364
F0599	Service Support Costs	59,843	59,843	60,571	57,632
	Operation of Arts Programme	248,443	248,443	254,935	251,996
	Service Division Total	3,376,684	3,359,184	3,353,602	3,340,257

RECREATION & AMENITY				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
Environment, Community and Local Government	0	0	25,000	25,000
Arts, Heritage & Gaeltacht	40,000	40,000	40,000	40,000
Library Council	25,000	25,000	0	0
Other	110,000	110,000	97,810	136,300
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	175,000	175,000	162,810	201,300
Goods and Services				
Library Fees/Fines	60,000	60,000	67,500	60,000
Superannuation	97,863	97,863	88,497	88,496
Local Authority Contributions	7,200	7,200	7,200	7,200
Other income	107,580	107,580	6,000	18,648
Total Goods and Services (b)	272,643	272,643	169,197	174,344
Total Income c=(a+b)	447,643	447,643	332,007	375,644

Division G– Agriculture, Health and Welfare Division

Food Safety

The service contract with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland continues with over 240 inspections and 20 audits conducted by Louth County Council veterinary inspectors to the various meat processing plants and abattoirs across the county. In 2013 an extra meat cutting plant was approved, so current total is 12 approved meat cutting/cooking plants, 1 registered meat distribution plant and 1 approved abattoir.

The Veterinary Shared Services project was also rolled out this year, which is a proposal to form three regions in the country along the lines of the 'Putting People First' document. Louth veterinary services is making a bid to be the lead county in the region which will cluster 8 counties to a single service with 8 sub-services.. This is in line with Government Policy and will result in savings across the sector. The regions are shown on the map below:-



Animal Welfare

The introduction of an online dog licence purchase option on the website of Louth County Council in 2012 has continued to gain success and online renewals of dog licenses now account for 30% of the overall total. This represents a good saving to Louth County Council and is also much more convenient for the dog owner. Overall numbers of licences for 2013 are expected to be around 5,500, which is below the 2008 peak of 7,000. The shared veterinary services project envisages establishing a national dog licence database in time, and the Department of Agriculture's announced in 2013 that they will implement compulsory micro-chipping in dogs in 2015, all of which may have a bearing on overall dog licence numbers.

The Dog Pound continued to have a busy year, with over 700 dogs passing through the pound. The re-homing rate is still among the best in the country with the figure averaging 90%. This is a tribute to the quality of the pound as well as the various initiatives in place, such as uploading all pound dogs onto the website for ease of viewing and re-homing.

Horse control and welfare is also a function of the pound and 2013 was the busiest year on record with regard to horse seizures, with over 130 horses impounded, significantly higher than the 33 horses impounded in 2012. Expenditure was exceeded due to the increased activity but all was recouped from the Department of Agriculture under the Control of Horses Act, meaning there was a commensurate increase in revenue. The Equine ID Regulations, in relation to horse passports, are also being amended and strengthened in 2014, and with officers from the local authority being authorised, so this may see increased activities with horses.

Next year will also see the new Animal Health & Welfare Act commenced, consolidating welfare legislation from the last 100 years, and this may see some additional roles for the local authority.

Higher education grants

The administration of higher education grants is carried out by Corporate Services on a county wide basis.

- A total of €3,496,388.81 was paid out for Higher Education Grants during the 2012/2013 Academic Year.

The value of grant awards is recouped from the Department of Education and Skills but the Council bears the full cost of administering the scheme.

In September 2012 the new Student Universal Ireland (SUSI) system was launched. All new applicants for the 2012/2013 and subsequent academic years make their applications to SUSI.

Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours

- **ANNAGASSAN HARBOUR** – We are currently awaiting a decision on a 10 year foreshore licence application has been made to the Department of Agriculture Food and Marine in order to remove silt which has built up in the harbour area which limits the berthing capacity at the pier.
- **CLOGHERHEAD HARBOUR** – During 2013, repair works to the Harbour wall were completed. Replacement pre-pay power supply kiosks and cabinets on the pier were also provided. Lighting on the inner harbour has been replaced with energy efficient lighting and meets the required lighting standards.

Coastal Protection

- **BELLURGAN EMBANKMENT** - Louth County Council appointed a consultant for the provision of engineering and environmental services in relation to the survey and assessment of the Bellurgan Embankment as a flood defence and the development of a strategy for the management of flood risk in the area presently protected by the embankment. The report of the consultant has been received.

AGRICULTURE, EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
G0201	Operation of Piers	25,000	25,000	22,500	75,000
G0203	Operation of Harbours	153,000	153,000	151,000	153,000
G0299	Service Support Costs	38,860	38,860	36,354	35,437
	Operation and Maintenance of Piers and Harbours	216,860	216,860	209,854	263,437
G0399	Service Support Costs	182,735	182,735	157,784	81,511
	Coastal Protection	182,735	182,735	157,784	81,511
G0402	Inspection of Abattoirs etc	160,000	160,000	166,000	160,000
G0404	Operation of Dog Warden Service	198,000	198,000	198,323	198,000
G0405	Other Animal Welfare Services (incl Horse Control)	36,000	36,000	24,395	60,000
G0499	Service Support Costs	153,676	153,676	141,349	134,490
	Veterinary Service	547,676	547,676	530,067	552,490
G0501	Payment of Higher Education Grants	2,509,000	2,509,000	4,637,000	4,637,000
G0502	Administration Higher Education Grants	38,130	38,130	67,715	67,715
G0505	Contribution to Education & Training Board	30,868	30,868	30,868	30,868
G0506	Other Educational Services	16,000	16,000	16,000	16,000
G0599	Service Support Costs	260,943	260,943	248,874	236,798
	Educational Support Services	2,854,941	2,854,941	5,000,457	4,988,381
	Service Division Total	3,802,212	3,802,212	5,898,162	5,885,819

AGRICULTURE , EDUCATION, HEALTH & WELFARE				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
Environment, Community and Local Government	156,000	156,000	160,344	216,000
Education and Skills	2,487,721	2,487,721	4,615,000	4,615,000
Transport Tourism & Sport	75,000	75,000	75,000	47,017
Other	34,000	34,000	0	0
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	2,752,721	2,752,721	4,850,344	4,878,017
Goods and Services				
Superannuation	26,059	26,059	23,565	23,565
Other income	182,583	182,583	173,582	186,282
Total Goods and Services (b)	208,642	208,642	197,147	209,847
Total Income c=(a+b)	2,961,363	2,961,363	5,047,491	5,087,864

Division H – Miscellaneous Services

Motor Tax

The Motor Tax service has gone through major changes in 2013 starting at the beginning of the year with the introduction of the new credit card size driver licences. The processing of licences was due to transfer over to the National Driver Licence Service in line with the introduction of these new licences but as there was a delay in the setting up of the Service the local authorities took on the new processing requirements to ensure continuation of service until the RSA and the National Driver Licence Service were ready to take on the role in quarter three of 2013. The additional processing requirements and the interim system caused increased pressure on the already restricted resources of the motor tax offices and we had to close both offices (Dundalk and Drogheda) on two occasions, in May 2013 to clear back logs of licences and again in November to clear the back log of licences applications submitted to the council in advance of the National Driver Licence Service taking over the service.

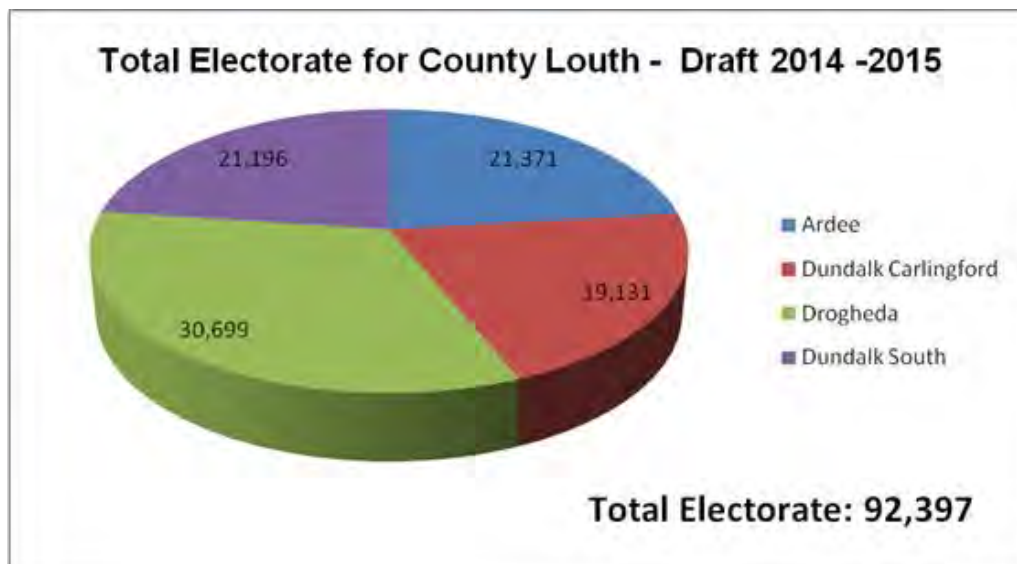
Also in 2013 legislation was passed which introduced changes to the rules regarding Certifying Your Vehicle Off the Road. From the 1st of July the regulations changed and an individual could no longer certify their vehicle off the road after the period but must certify it off the road in advance. The legislation allowed a period of three months, up to the 1st of October, for members of the public to get their applications up to date and this again this caused a major increase in the number of customers to the Motor Tax offices especially in the final week of September when we experienced exceptional numbers of customers at the Motor Tax Counters.

To clear the back log created by the licence change over and the certifying a vehicle off the road the offices in both Dundalk and Drogheda closed at 2pm every day for the month of November and the staff cleared an unprecedented number of applications over the four week period.

The number of customers using the Motor Tax offices have reduced dramatically since the beginning of November and this reduction will be monitored going forward and a full review of the service provision will be carried out in the new year.

Franchise

The Draft Register of Electors 2014/2015 was published on 01/11/2013 with 92,397 electors registered to vote. The Register will come into force on 15/02/2014 and will remain in force for all elections and referenda held within the period 15/02/2014 to 14/02/2015.



A Supplement to the Register was produced in 2013 to accommodate voters in the Referendums Thirty-second Amendment of the Constitution (Abolition of Seanad Éireann) Bill 2013 Thirty-third Amendment of the Constitution (Court of Appeal) Bill 2013 referendum in October 2013.

Local Representation & Civic Leadership

With the new Local Government Act expected to be signed into law shortly together with the objectives of the “Putting People First” document there will be an increased focus on engaging with individuals and communities in order to deliver on our new model of local government. This will include but not be singly focused on conducting the local elections in May 2014.

Tables

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
H0101	Maintenance of Machinery Service	76,000	76,000	63,877	76,000
H0102	Plant and Machinery Operations	666,745	666,745	780,000	666,745
H0199	Service Support Costs	165,346	165,346	153,387	146,296
	Profit/Loss Machinery Account	908,091	908,091	997,264	889,041
H0301	Administration of Rates Office	17,670	17,670	14,170	17,670
H0302	Debt Management Service Rates	274,913	74,913	64,282	114,195
H0303	Refunds and Irrecoverable Rates	1,520,304	1,020,000	1,020,000	1,020,000
H0399	Service Support Costs	54,395	54,395	54,843	52,748
	Administration of Rates	1,867,282	1,166,978	1,153,295	1,204,613
H0401	Register of Elector Costs	147,306	147,306	147,800	147,800
H0402	Local Election Costs	180,000	180,000	30,000	30,000
H0499	Service Support Costs	50,975	50,975	50,894	48,424
	Franchise Costs	378,281	378,281	228,694	226,224
H0501	Coroner Fees and Expenses	195,000	195,000	198,069	215,000
H0599	Service Support Costs	22,610	22,610	18,188	17,305
	Operation and Morgue and Coroner Expenses	217,610	217,610	216,257	232,305
H0601	Weighbridge Operations	3,600	3,600	3,600	2,400
H0699	Service Support Costs	0	0	1,200	1,142
	Weighbridges	3,600	3,600	4,800	3,542
H0702	Casual Trading Areas	2,000	2,000	0	0
	Operation of Markets and Casual Trading	2,000	2,000	0	0
H0801	Malicious Damage	5,000	5,000	5,000	0
	Malicious Damage	5,000	5,000	5,000	0

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES					
Code	Expenditure by Service and Sub-Service	2014		2013	
		Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
		€	€	€	€
H0901	Representational Payments	457,039	457,039	435,824	436,006
H0902	Chair/Vice Chair Allowances	31,530	31,530	31,530	31,530
H0904	Expenses LA Members	241,616	259,116	188,880	191,070
H0905	Other Expenses	37,000	37,000	37,000	37,000
H0906	Conferences Abroad	8,000	8,000	8,000	8,000
H0907	Retirement Gratuities	354,130	354,130	0	0
H0908	Contribution to Members Associations	79,806	79,806	80,050	79,985
H0999	Service Support Costs	780	780	17,090	16,261
	Local Representation/Civic Leadership	1,209,901	1,227,401	798,374	799,852
H1001	Motor Taxation Operation	606,054	606,054	637,193	539,692
H1099	Service Support Costs	339,069	339,069	329,587	313,594
	Motor Taxation	945,123	945,123	966,780	853,286
H1101	Agency & Recoupable Service	188,735	188,735	41,010	161,636
H1199	Service Support Costs	80,157	80,157	70,573	67,149
	Agency & Recoupable Services	268,892	268,892	111,583	228,785
	Service Division Total	5,805,780	5,122,976	4,482,047	4,437,648

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES				
	2014		2013	
Income by Source	Adopted by Council	Estimated by Manager	Adopted by Council	Estimated Outturn
	€	€	€	€
Government Grants				
Environment, Community and Local Government	5,000	5,000	5,000	0
Social Protection	65,000	65,000	80,000	97,000
Justice and Equality	5,000	5,000	15,500	5,500
Other	61,500	61,500	54,000	37,200
Total Grants & Subsidies (a)	136,500	136,500	154,500	139,700
Goods and Services				
Superannuation	62,561	62,561	56,573	56,573
Local Authority Contributions	281,764	281,764	225,570	225,570
NPPR	0	0	400,000	600,000
Other income	1,895,499	1,895,499	1,561,455	1,218,071
Total Goods and Services (b)	2,239,824	2,239,824	2,243,598	2,100,214
Total Income c=(a+b)	2,376,324	2,376,324	2,398,098	2,239,914

Central Management Charge

Corporate Services

Corporate Services will in the coming year focus on:

- Development of a digital robust and sustainable Council Meeting Administration System (CMAS) and support this with training for the Elected Members.
- Deliver on a Customer Relationship Management systems to support and improve response to customer service enquiries.
- The development of a Portal for Elected Members with a dedicated Public Representatives Correspondence system to enable tracking and quality control of responses.
- Facilitate the statutory function of the Audit Committee including any new role it may have following the introduction of the Local Government Act, 2013.
- The maintenance and improvements of Council buildings in order to ensure these important assets are maintained in a fashion fitting to serve the needs of the public who access same for service and for the staff who work therein.
- Continue to develop a best practice procurement resource for the organisation in order to achieve efficiencies and improved value for money.

Resource Management

With the continuation of the Local Government reform process the main focus for the Human Resource Department for 2014 will be:

- The implementation of revised staffing structures which take account of the reduction in staff numbers which has been ongoing over the past five years and in particular the dissolution of the Town Councils.
- The transition of all Town Council employees to the employment of Louth County Council.
- To facilitate the migration to the new operating model for the delivery of Water services following the establishment of Irish Water.
- The implementation of the Haddington Road agreement.
- The facilitation of the Shared Service programme.
- The continuation of the roll-out of PMDS.

The organisation must however protect and safeguard all its employees and on that basis the Council will continue to provide funding and training to ensure that all assignments are carried out in a safe manner while ensuring the welfare of all.

APPENDIX 1	
Summary of Central Management Charge	
	2014 €
Area Office Overhead	620,516
Corporate Affairs Overhead	1,064,047
Corporate Buildings Overhead	658,521
Finance Function Overhead	1,006,845
Human Resource Function	1,712,683
IT Services	1,233,636
Print/Post Room Service Overhead Allocation	252,500
Pension & Lump Sum Overhead	2,677,590
Total Expenditure Allocated to Services	9,226,338

CERTIFICATE OF ADOPTION

I hereby certify that at the budget meeting of Louth County Council held this 16th day of December, 2013 the Council by Resolution adopted for the financial year ending on the 31st day of December, 2014 the budget set out in Tables *(A -F) and by Resolution determined in accordance with the said budget the Rates set out in Tables *(B and C) to be the annual rate on valuation to be levied for that year for the purposes set out in those Tables.

Signed


Cathaoirleach

Countersigned


Manager

Dated this 16th day of December, 2013