

1988 - 2003

# CORPORATE SERVICES

A TIME TO REFLECT



64



65

1988 - 2003

# CORPORATE SERVICES

A TIME TO REFLECT

66) Millennium Centre

67) Signing Relationship Agreement - Louth/Sault Ste. Marie

68) Video - "Louth A Bright Future"

69) Official Opening County Hall

70) Louth Society New York

## Debt Removal

The commercial valuation of the County Council area increased from €35,500 in 1988 to €105,000 in 2003. The key feature in relation to the finance portfolio was **the elimination, through business methods, of some €6 million of debt, a situation which prevailed in the early 1990s.** Also of significance was the general re-organisation of staff, functions and duties, including the establishment of a Value for Money section (1996), in accordance with the Strategic Management Initiative. The introduction of the district committees in the same year based on the county's electoral areas also proved to be a successful initiative.

Other activities included the appointment of a Freedom of Information Officer and the commencement of a number of initiatives in the area of Information Technology including -

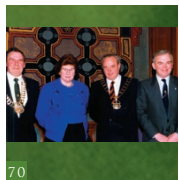
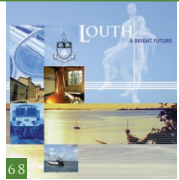
- Wide Area Network,
- New Website,
- Internet/Intranet facilities,
- Pilot GIS Project, (Ardee)
- Document Imaging System.
- ECDL & MCSE Training
- Computer facilities for Councillors

An Equality Officer was appointed and an Equality Action Team, drawn from a representative group of staff and unions, was also set up for the

purpose of advancing a number of initiatives including the preparation of a statement on equality policy. Other related initiatives included the staff care service, the annual pensioners' (inc. Dundalk and Drogheda) mass and dinner together with the staff Christmas party held in County Hall. The social club was also actively supported. In accordance with the new reform process, a workplace partnership group was also established. A Junior Council was also launched. Annual Christmas functions for the elected members of each local authority proved to be particularly successful.

In recent years, most of the remaining elements of the "Better Local Government" proposals were put in place. The Corporate Plan was formally adopted by the elected members and this would provide coherence in terms of corporate objectives for future years. The County Development Board Strategy was advanced considerably with much input from the recently established Directorate of Community and Enterprise. There was also a considerable revamp of the staffing structure in order to match it with the programme of change. The Strategic Policy Committees and the Corporate Policy Group had been

ANNUAL REPORT SUPPLEMENT



71) Louth County Council 1992

established while a new tier of senior management at Director of Services level was also put in place.

- Ardee (Market Square) at commencement stage
- Woodlands Depot at planning stage
- Dundalk (The Crescent) at commencement stage

72) Official Opening County Hall

#### County Hall - The Jewel in the Crown

The Louth County Hall is an ultra modern complex which represents the best in contemporary Irish architecture and workmanship. The spectacular new headquarters are a fitting tribute to the local government system, particularly in its centenary year. The emphasis is on convenience for the county's citizens.

#### Public Private Partnership

The following PPP schemes were initiated and are currently ongoing

73) Louth Local Authorities Centenary Memoirs

74) Centenary Memoir - Minutes of First Meeting - 22/4/1899

#### Refurbishment of Louth Hospital

The sensitive restoration and refit of this listed building greatly facilitated the operation of the motor taxation, fire and planning departments for most of the 1990's. The building was appropriately disposed of to the local grammar school as a result of the relocation of the departments to County Hall.

- Dundalk South West Sector (Sanitary Services)
- Dundalk South East Sector (Sanitary Services)
- Dundalk Harbour Project (in conjunction with Dundalk Town Council and Dundalk Port Company)
- Haymarket Bridge Drogheda

75) Louth Local Authorities Website

#### Louth Local Authorities Website

At the touch of a keyboard the services Louth has to offer are open to the world.

#### Area Offices

As envisaged in the corporate plan, in order to carry out a more integrated and streamlined service, a major programme of improvement is currently in train in relation to the area office structure. This includes the following:

- Dunleer (Bramley Lodge) at planning stage

#### International Relations

With the advent of increasing globalisation, the potential for interaction with areas such as southern Ontario has been fully explored with a view to expanding business and civic linkage. A relationship agreement with the city of Sault Ste. Marie was signed in 2001. Linkage was developed with the Louth Society of New York as part of the annual St. Patrick's

ANNUAL REPORT SUPPLEMENT



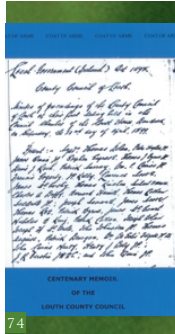
71



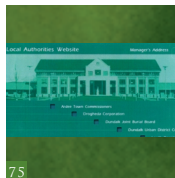
73



72



74



75

1988 - 2003

# CORPORATE SERVICES

A TIME TO REFLECT

## 76) Municipal Centre Drogheda

Day celebrations. The visit to Stonetown by the Governor of New York, George Pataki, was also noteworthy. Possibly, the single greatest highlight, however, was the visit by President Clinton to Dundalk in December 2000 with many of the arrangements having been co-ordinated by officials of the County and Town Councils. Other linkages included Sydney and Toronto.

### Centenary Celebrations

The Louth Local Authorities put together an imaginative programme of events which presented an opportunity to highlight the very real achievements in local government over the years, to promote interest in its affairs generally and to further improve its public image.

The main projects included -

- The launch of the Centenary Book
- The Centenary Concert
- The Centenary Council Meeting
- Open Week involving guided tours of all local authority facilities.

### Courthouses

Louth County Council oversaw the major refurbishment of Dundalk Courthouse at an estimated cost of €10 million, a project which will clearly augment the renewal of the adjoining Town Hall. Similarly, the

new courthouse at Carlingford represents another successful partnership arrangement as a new branch library is housed in the same building. Drogheda Borough Council is making available a site for a new courthouse in that town.

### Promotional Video

This quality production will greatly enhance the profile of the county in terms of marketability and promotion, both locally and overseas.