

CHUIG GACH BALL DEN CHOMHAIRLE  
**DRAFT BUDGET FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING  
31ST DECEMBER, 2010**

**To: The Mayor and each Member of Galway County Council**

**Re: Draft Budget for financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2010. Submitted in  
accordance with Section 103, Local Government Act 2001**

**Dear Member,**

I enclose, for your consideration, the Draft Budget for 2010, together with a report detailing the main provisions outlined therein. A summary report from the Directors of Service in respect of activities of their respective functional areas is also enclosed. In accordance in the statutory requirement the Draft Budget was considered at a meeting of the Corporate Policy Group held on December 18<sup>th</sup> and will again be considered at a meeting on 4th January 2010.

The Council is required to:

- a) adopt the Draft Budget, with or without amendment and
- b) determine, in accordance with the Budget so adopted, the annual rate on the valuation to be levied. The Council is required to complete the statutory process within a period of 21 days. This allows, for the adjournment, if necessary of the statutory meeting which is scheduled for 4<sup>th</sup> January 2010, provided the process is completed by 24<sup>th</sup> January 2010.

**Context of Budgetary preparation**

During 2009, we have experienced a substantial change in the economic context in which we are operating. The year 2009 has seen major adjustments for the Council in terms of responding to the reduction in resources which were available while at the same time attempting to maintain quality essential services and respond to more onerous statutory compliance requirements, particularly in the water services area.

Galway County Council is aware of the difficulties being experienced by residents of the County, businesses and communities arising during this period of economic turmoil and is committed to ensuring the cost effective delivery of services, with the available resources.

The demands on our Council have changed as a result of the economic downturn with some areas of activity experiencing reduced demand e.g. planning and capital works while other areas are experiencing an increase for example, housing, higher education grants and library services. In addition, the Council is expanding services in a number of areas. For example, more than 2,550 households have been connected to the public water supply in the last eighteen months as the Council provided water to group water schemes from the public water supply. New capital works are also underway e.g. Tuam, Remedial Action Programme etc.

Galway County Council must respond flexibly to the changed resources available and demand for services. Galway County Council provides essential services and spends significant resources throughout the County. The 2010 Budget represents a valuable injection of funds to County Galway.

### **Budget 2010**

The draft budget for 2010 envisages expenditure of €149million . This represents a reduction of 4.2% on the budget adopted for 2009 of €156m. Members will be aware that the Government held a second budget for 2009 in April 2009 which impacted severely on Galway Council specifically reducing road grant funding, and Local Government Fund, resulting in a need for further expenditure adjustments during 2009. These reductions amounted to €9.2 Million in road grants and a €1.3M reduction in the Local Government Fund.

**TABLE 1: BUDGETARY TREND 2008 - 2010**

<i>2008 Adopted Budget</i>	<i>€160 M</i>
<i>2009 Adopted Budget</i>	<i>€156 M</i>
<i>Adjustments following April Budget</i>	<i>€10.5M</i>
<i>Adjusted 2009 Resources available</i>	<i>€145.5M</i>
<i>2010 Draft Budget</i>	<i>€149 M</i>

It should be noted that the budget includes a figure for road grants based on the 2009 allocation as the 2010 allocation has not yet been received.

Key influences in the preparation of the Draft Budget.

#### **(1) Local Government Fund**

The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government have advised Galway County Council that our provisional allocation for the year 2010 is €36,092,172.

The figure of €36,092,172 represents a decrease of 5.3% on our initial 2009 allocation, representing a reduction in resources available to this Council of €2M

#### **(2) The trend in Local Government Fund allocation is as follows: -**

		<i>% Reduction</i>
<i>2008 Allocation</i>	<i>€40.6m</i>	
<i>2009 Initial Allocation</i>	<i>€38.114m</i>	<i>6%</i>
<i>2009 Revised Allocation</i>	<i>€36.888m</i>	<i>3%</i>
<i>2010 Allocation</i>	<i>€36.092m</i>	<i>2%</i>
<i>Cumulative Reduction (2008 to 2010)</i>		<i>11%</i>

It should be noted that the allocations for 2009 and 2010 must be adjusted for the amendment to pay rates introduced in the recent budget and also the pension levies introduced earlier this year.

#### **(3) Reduction in Operating Costs**

Budget 2010 announced a reduction in pay rates across the public service. This will result in payroll savings accruing in the Local Government sector in 2010. Local Authorities are to retain 65% of the payroll saving to be realised in 2010, with the remaining 35% reverting to the Exchequer. These reductions are being applied across

all personnel on Galway County Councils payroll (excluding pensioners) for 2010. The value of the pay reduction reflected in the budget is approximately € 2 M .

During 2009 Galway County Council has increased its focus on cost reduction. An organisational efficiency review was undertaken under the auspices of the Workplace Partnership Committee, a joint initiative of Management and Unions. Numerous recommendations have been brought forward. A significant amount of savings have been obtained in areas such as energy efficiency and cost reduction, office rental costs, phone costs, procurement of chemicals and road making materials and machinery, office consumables etc. This work will continue in 2010 and Mr. Paul Ridge, Director of Service will be re-assigned to lead the analysis and implementation of the recommendations of the efficiency review from January.

The year 2009 has seen a substantial reduction in the staff resource available to the Council, arising from non-renewal of temporary contracts, implementation of the incentivised scheme of early retirement, and incentivised career break scheme, retirement of staff and resignations, non-replacement of staff who leave whether permanently or for temporary absences such as maternity leave.

During 2009 the following reductions in staff numbers have occurred.

#### **Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement**

A total of 17 applications have been approved. 13 staff members have already retired from the organisation, with the remainder to retire in 2010.

#### **Incentivised Career break Scheme.**

Galway County Council has granted 4 applications received under this scheme.

#### **Retirement of other eligible staff**

There were 46 retirements in 2009

#### **Non-renewal of temporary contracts**

The continued non-renewal of temporary contracts has given rise to further reductions in staffing numbers as current contracts expire, amounting to 82

The combined impact of these measures indicate that there has been an overall reduction in staffing number of 145 in 2009. Replacement of any of these posts will be limited to a small number of essential posts e.g. some positions in the Fire Service, where redeployment is not an option, where the post is still required and where specific sanction is received from the Department of the Environment and funding is available. Reductions in staffing levels since mid 2008 amount to 185, of which 103 were indoor staff and 82 outdoor. This reduction in staffing levels will require the re-organisation and restructuring of council services. This re-organisation will reflect changed levels of activity in the various Council services, expectations regarding capital expenditure, increased demands in many areas arising from directives / legislation governing Health & Safety, Environmental Protection and Risk Management and changes required in the operation of certain services e.g housing leasing. As resources reduce, it will be essential to prioritise essential services in the assignment of staff and have realistic expectations regarding the levels of service that can be sustained.

### **Local Government Efficiency Review Group**

The Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, Mr John Gormley T.D. announced on 10 December 2009 the establishment of a Local Government Efficiency Review Group to review the cost base, expenditure of and numbers employed in local authorities.

The Terms of Reference for the Group are:

To review the cost base, expenditure of and numbers employed in local authorities with a view to reporting on:

- specific recommendation to reduce costs;
- the effectiveness of particular programmes;
- optimal efficiency in the way programmes are delivered; and,
- any other proposals to enhance value for money in the delivery of services at local level.

The Group will take account of Government policy on local government organisation, reform and finances, the public service context set by the Task Force on the Public Service and associated Government Statement, necessary legal compliance by local authorities particularly in relation to environmental requirements, public health, and health and safety; and the need to achieve rebalance in the public finances.

The Minister confirmed that there will be a comprehensive consultation process involving the key stakeholders, including government Departments/Agencies, local authorities, business and local authority representative groups and the general public.

There will be wide representation on the Group to oversee the work and it will consist of representatives from the business community, Government Departments/Agencies and local authorities and people who have wide experience in central and local government. The Group will be chaired by Mr Pat McLoughlin, Business Consultant and former Deputy Chief Executive of the Health Services Executive.

The Group is expected to complete its work by mid-2010.

#### **(4) New Requirements and Standards**

When I was appointed as County Manager in 2007, members expressed the view that a particular focus of attention should be the water services area. This area received priority in the last two budgets and this approach will continue. We must ensure that water and waste water services comply with the standards being set at EU and National level. Capital investment is required in the Remedial Action List for water and to meet expectations in relation to waste water provision. Water conservation programmes must also continue to be prioritised as they ensure efficiency improvements.

However, the Council must also prioritise the operation and maintenance of plants to fulfil our legal obligations and protect public health and meet the costs of running new and upgraded facilities.

The Draft Budget includes provision of €27.6m for the Water Services Division. This represents an increase of 13.6% on the provision for 2009. This cost continues to increase, in spite of significant cost savings achieved in 2009 in the area of energy and chemicals.

During 2009, resources were applied to the implementation of the Water Services Investment Programme, improvement of the operation and maintenance function and the advancing of the programme of remedial measures to address the immediate deficiencies and address compliance issues.

The increase in costs can be accounted for by a number of elements.

- (i) Requirement for improved operation, maintenance and management.
- (ii) Take-over of Group Water Schemes
- (iii) More complex treatment processes
- (iv) Sludge Disposal costs
- (v) New and upgraded plants coming on stream
- (vi) DBO plants.
- (vii) Loan charges

Cost increases in excess of €1m apply in this case for new plants.

### **National Water Pricing Policy**

Galway County Council, in 2009, has borrowed almost €20m to cover the cost of capital investment which is not met by the DoE in the context of the National Water Pricing Policy. The cost of servicing water services borrowing in 2010 is estimated at €2.5m, an increase of €1.3m on 2009.

In accordance with the National Water Pricing Policy, the costs incurred in the provision of water services are intended to be met through charging the non-domestic consumer the economic cost of production for the proportion attributable to this sector, with the balance in respect of the domestic sector being recouped through the Local Government Fund. The implementation of this approach indicates that Galway County Councils' current charge for water and wastewater is significantly lower than the actual costs incurred.

In addition, while the water services section has worked to stabilise operating costs in 2009, the Local Government Fund has reduced by 2.2%. There is therefore a significant shortfall in funding for the increasing cost of water services, which is unsustainable.

The Draft Budget includes an income provision of €750,000 as an estimated contribution from the Department of the Environment to meet the increasing costs associated with the cost of supplying water services to the domestic sector.

The issue of under recovery from the non-domestic sector must also be addressed, in line with the National Water Pricing Policy.

Trends in cost of operation and maintenance of water services

	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>Estimated 2008</i>
<i>O&amp;M</i>	<i>€'000</i>	<i>€'000</i>	<i>€'000</i>	<i>€'000</i>	<i>€'000</i>
<i>Water</i>	4835	5454	5400	7642	8157
<i>Waste Water</i>	1556	1869	2280	2992	3322
<i>Total</i>	<b>6391</b>	<b>7323</b>	<b>7680</b>	10634	11479

**Note:** With the implementation of the new costings system, including the apportionment of divisional overheads and central management charges, it is necessary to restate the water and waste water budgeted figures for comparison purposes with the equivalent figures as set out hereunder.

	<i>2008 (as restated)</i>	<i>Budget 2009</i>	<i>Budget 2010</i>
<i>O&amp;M</i>	<i>€'000</i>	<i>€'000</i>	<i>€'000</i>
<i>Water</i>	<i>11,445</i>	<i>13,968</i>	<i>14,000</i>
<i>Waste Water</i>	<i>4,225</i>	<i>4,656</i>	<i>6,425</i>
<i>Total</i>	<i>15,670</i>	<i>18,624</i>	<i>20,425</i>

#### Trends in Charging

<i>Charge per M3</i>	<i>2004</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>2006</i>	<i>2007</i>	<i>2008</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2010</i>
<i>Water</i>	<i>0.66</i>	<i>0.73</i>	<i>0.73</i>	<i>0.80</i>	<i>0.89</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>1.10</i>
<i>Waste Water</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>0.07</i>	<i>0.50</i>	<i>0.61</i>	<i>1.07</i>	<i>1.18</i>
<i>Consolidated</i>	<i>0.73</i>	<i>0.80</i>	<i>0.80</i>	<i>1.30</i>	<i>1.50</i>	<i>2.07</i>	<i>2.28</i>

The full implementation of the National Water Pricing Policy would require a charging level as follows:

- Water €1.71
- Waste Water €2.90

In the context of the current economic climate, I would propose to move towards full cost recovery in compliance with national requirements, on a phased basis. Having regard to the difficult economic climate, I propose that the water charge increases for 2010 be limited to 10% which is far less than that required to achieve full cost recovery as indicated above.

In the context of the implementation of the Water Pricing Policy and the under-recovery in Galway County, the commercial water users are being subsidised and this restricts the availability of resources for other services. In addition, it will impact on the Council's capacity to co-fund new Capital investment which is needed to ensure the legal compliance standards are met.

Other service improvement costs will also arise when we open the new library in Tuam in early 2010. Cost increases are also arising due to retirements, resulting in an increase of more than €1m euro in the necessary provision for 2010.

#### **Commercial Rates**

In view of the difficult trading conditions for many businesses at present, I do not propose to increase the rate multiplier for 2010. I would also remind Members that the commercial rate in County Galway is significantly less than comparator Counties e.g. Mayo, Donegal, Kerry. I have also increased the provision for refunds and irrecoverable rates in 2010.

#### **Cost Reduction**

In order to deliver a balanced Draft Budget for the consideration of Council, it has been necessary to reprioritise work and identify efficiency improvements. The following tables set out the expenditure and income breakdown proposed for 2010.

<b>EXPENDITURE BY PROGRAMME GROUP</b>			
	<b>Adopted Budget 2009</b>	<b>Estimated Outturn 2009</b>	<b>Draft Budget 2010</b>
	€	€	€
Housing and Building	12,014,184	11,756,449	11,621,417
Road Transportation & Safety	52,583,736	41,777,745	39,089,311
Water Services	24,293,133	25,279,074	27,600,799
Development Management	11,249,058	9,252,717	8,439,110
Environmental Services	18,994,207	18,829,384	18,221,687
Recreation & Amenity	8,096,178	8,066,816	8,239,509
Agriculture, Education Health & Welfare	20,593,350	22,672,188	24,377,509
Miscellaneous Services	7,766,816	8,048,987	11,408,271
<b>Total</b>	<b>155,590,662</b>	<b>145,683,360</b>	<b>148,997,613</b>

In the Draft Budget, the estimated Revenue Income anticipated is as follows: -

<b>Estimated Revenue Income</b>	<b>2009</b>		<b>2010</b>	
	€	%	€	%
Local Government Fund	38,114,833	25	32,787,941	22
Pension Related Deduction	0	0	2,600,000	2
NPPR	0	0	1,800,000	1
State Grants & Subsidies	64,981,798	42	57,079,187	38
Non-Domestic Water Charges	5,062,828	3	4,137,500	3
Local Determined Income	30,131,014	19	29,287,075	20
Other Income	17,300,189	11	21,305,910	14
	<b>155,590,662</b>	100	<b>148,997,613</b>	100

### **Expenditure Adjustments**

I attach hereunder a table setting out the principal variances between the Budget for 2009 and 2010.

Service	Service Description	2010	2009	Change
		€	€	€
A07	RAS Programme	1,963,984	1,300,105	663,879
B				
Division	Road Transport & Safety	39,089,311	52,583,736	(13,494,425)
C02	Waste Water Treatment	6,425,959	4,656,472	1,769,487
C03	Collection of Water & Waste Water Charges	1,689,367	934,981	754,386
C06	Support to Water Capital Programme	1,532,767	1,201,431	331,336
D01	Forward Planning	761,860	1,167,993	(406,133)
D02	Development Management	3,516,563	4,153,208	(636,645)
D09	Economic Development and Promotion	709,327	1,588,930	(879,603)
E09	Maintenance of Burial Grounds	695,456	869,834	(174,378)
E11	Operation of Fire Service	11,134,499	11,251,008	(116,509)
G05	Educational support Services	22,281,279	18,207,591	4,073,588
H01	Machinery Yard	3,000,000	0	3,000,000
	Subtotal of above	92,800,272	97,915,289	(5,115,017)
	Total Expenditure	148,997,613	155,590,662	(6,593,049)

The increase in the RAS programme reflects the expansion of this service and is funded by the Department, the reduction in the roads division reflects the reduced grants notified in 2009 and payroll reductions, the increase in water costs reflects the operation of new plants and increased loan charges, the reduction in Service D09 again reflects a reduction in grant funding. Service G09 contains the payment of HEG grants and VEC pensions and are fully funded, whilst service H01 is a contra item i.e. we have matching income of €3M with both expenditure and income now reflected under the new costing of services format of the budget.

As you will note from the table, the budgetary strategy continues the prioritisation of water services to meet rising operation and maintenance costs. This is essential to ensure improvements in water quality, environmental protection and compliance with the law.

Many of the costs incurred by the Council are non-discretionary costs in that they must be spent on particular services, for example, Higher Education Grants, loan charges, statutory demands, pensions etc. The scope for reduction in costs and expenditure is therefore limited to discretionary items.

There has been a reduction in activity in the development management area which is reflected in proposed cost reductions and a reduction in provision for forward planning.

Galway County Council has a strong tradition of supporting the various voluntary and community activities throughout the County across the range of services e.g. Golden Mile and other heritage activities, festivals and arts activities, economic and tourism activities. Galway County Council will continue to support Community activity through the work of the staff of the Community, Enterprise and Economic Development section and Heritage section and by the retention of grants at the level agreed in the adopted budget for 2009.

Work will continue in areas such as the RAPID programme, Sports Partnership, tourism promotion, bio-diversity initiatives etc.

A significant reduction of €0.75 m in the allocation to county roads from the Councils' own resources is also necessary and will impact on the level of activity in 2010. As in other years, a full picture will emerge following the notification of grants from the Department of Transport and the NRA to allow compilation of the Roads Works programme for 2010.

In recent years significant resources have been assigned to the Library Service, with an expansion in service availability and hours of operation. It is a valued service in communities throughout the City and County. A large proportion of the cost of the library service is in payroll and establishment areas. In order to achieve savings in 2009 it was necessary to substantially reduce the library book fund. However, such a reduction could not be sustained over a number of years. Therefore, the 2010 budget includes provision to partially restore the fund to €450,000.

## **Non Rates Income**

### **Non – Principal Private Residences (NPPR)**

In July 2009, a €200 charge was introduced on non-principal private residences. The effective liability date for the charges was 31<sup>st</sup> July 2009, following the enactment of the legislation. The Local Government Management Association has collected the charge on a shared service basis for local authorities. A project board comprised of local authority officials has overseen the implementation of the charges. The legislation provides for self-certification and penalties for late payment. The vast majority of payments have been made on-line, reducing overhead costs. The estimated revenue for Galway County Council for 2009 was €1.8m and I am happy to report that this level of income has been substantially achieved. This new source of Local Government funding is very welcome in these difficult times. The Draft budget includes a similar target for 2010. The Council has commenced the process of identifying any properties to which the levy applies and which have not yet been paid and this will be pursued further in 2010. I would advise that anyone who believes they may have a liability to discharge it without delay as the level of penalties that accrue are substantial.

Income sources from planning fees and fire safety certificates have seen significant reductions in 2009 and it anticipated that this reduced level of income will continue in 2010.

### **Capital Investment in Infrastructure**

The capital programme for the three year period 2010 – 2012 is attached to this report. This report has been informed by the availability of resources and consequently is less ambitious than previous programmes. The sources of funding for capital are linked to Government grants and in the recent budget the Minister has indicated that:

#### Housing

- €1.1 billion for housing measures. The innovative move towards leasing of housing available in the market reduces the need for construction. Overall housing budget will deliver some 9,000 new housing units for households in need of housing in 2010
- €80 million is being provided for housing adaptations grants for older people and people with disability.
- Funding for energy efficiency retrofitting programme in the public housing stock doubles to €40.

#### Water Services

- €508 million (no cut) to continue high level investment in water services infrastructure. New three year capital investment programme to be announced by the Minister shortly to prioritise key requirements county wide.
- Investment in the upgrading of rural water schemes to continue.
- Water metering for households to be implemented to promote more efficient use of water. This will provide a fair basis for a charging system based on consumption with a free allowance.

We await more detailed information from the DoE in relation to these issues. The funding for the development of the National Roads will be dependent on allocations

from the NRA and the Department of Transport. Other funding sources which the Council utilises to fund capital investment are contributions from other bodies, Development Contributions and borrowing. Members will be aware that income from development contributions has been severely curtailed. In addition, our capacity to borrow and meet the resulting payments will prove problematic into the future unless the level of resources available is altered.

Therefore our capacity to deliver the capital programme will be impacted.

### **Conclusion**

The preparation of the draft Annual Budget for 2010 has been difficult, in the context of increasing costs and responsibilities and services standards, with a reduced resource available. I believe that the proposed Draft Budget will allow Galway County Council to deliver the optimum provision of core services in 2010, within available resources. The proposed gross expenditure of €149m together with the capital programme spend estimated at €300 m, represents a very considerable investment of public monies in the development of the county and delivery of services throughout the County.

If resources were available, there are many other valuable areas of activity we would wish to engage in. However, we must now adapt to the challenge of delivering with less resources. We will continue to advance the capital infrastructure programmes, particularly in roads and water services, which will contribute to improve the competitiveness of County Galway. As you will see from the reports of the Directors of Service, much progress was made in 2009 and will continue in 2010.

I wish to thank the elected members and staff of the Council for their co-operation and support during 2009. I wish to record my appreciation to the Mayor, Cllr. Tom McHugh and former Mayor Cllr. Peter Feeney for their commitment to the special responsibilities of the office of Mayor and their courtesy and co-operation in doing the business of the Council. I wish to acknowledge the assistance of the Corporate Policy Group in the discussion on the draft budget.

I wish to thank the Council's Directors of Service and their staff for their rigorous examination of budget items for 2010 to identify areas for efficiency improvement and cost saving. In particular, I want to acknowledge the work of Mr. Ger Mullarkey, Michael McGovern and the staff in the Finance Unit. The preparation of the Draft Budget this year has been particularly onerous and has been approached in a most meticulous manner and I thank all involved in delivering the draft budget.

The year 2010 will undoubtedly be a challenging one for Galway County Council but I am confident that with support of the Members, Management team, and colleagues we will provide valuable services in 2010 to meet the needs of the citizens and adapt flexibly to the changes required.

I recommend the Draft Budget to you for adoption.

*Yours sincerely,*

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*Martina Moloney,  
County Manager*

## **Divisional Reports**

## HOUSING UNIT

### HES 1: SOCIAL & AFFORDABLE HOUSING

The DEHLG has indicated that the construction programmes of the Local Authorities will be reduced dramatically over the next few years. The Capital Allocation for construction in 2009 was €14.4m. In 2010 we expect it to be approximately half of that amount. The emphasis in the future will be on leasing of already constructed units through the Voluntary Housing Sector or the Local Authorities.

Galway County Council has advertised to determine the level of interest in leasing. Responses have been received and are being evaluated and if appropriate will be progressed. The funds for leasing are provided through the Capital Construction Budget.

#### Housing Waiting List:

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- In the triennial Assessment of Housing Need carried out in March 2008, the total net need for social housing was 1,077 households. In the year to date, there has been a marked increase in the demand for housing supports and the total net need now stands at 2,010 which can be further broken down as follows:

Category of Need	No.
Homeless	19
Traveller	127
Unfit Accommodation	63
Overcrowded	48
Involuntary Sharing	100
Young people leaving institutional care	0
Medical / compassionate	277
Elderly	110
Disabled	89
Financial	1177
<b>Total Net Need</b>	<b>2,010</b>

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Housing Unit will continue to assess the needs of all housing applicants and determine the most appropriate housing options having regard to the funding available for various schemes.

#### Housing Construction:

Capital Programme 2010-2012:

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Details of total number of houses completed as at 30th November 2009 is outlined hereunder:

<i>Social houses completed</i>	85
<i>Voluntary units completed</i>	20
<i>Affordable houses completed (AHI 62)</i>	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>170</b>

*Proposals for 2010:*

- It is proposed to construct/acquire 62 houses in the following categories:

<i>Social Houses</i>	<i>35</i>
<i>Voluntary</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Affordable</i>	<i><u>12</u></i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>

**Social Housing:**

(1) Local Authority Housing

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- A total of 172 allocations of social housing were completed in the year to date, comprising of:

<b>Category of Allocation</b>	<b>No. units</b>
Local Authority Construction Programme:	
Garrai an Chlochair, Carna	17
Raheen, Athenry	30
The Gables, Portumna	3
Myles Park, Corofin	2
Part V – Social Housing	20
Single Instance / Rural Houses	28
Turnover of existing stock	72
<b>Total</b>	<b>172</b>

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Newly constructed and existing units of accommodation will be allocated to applicants on the housing waiting list, in accordance with the criteria set down in the Scheme of Letting Priorities.

(2) Extensions to Local Authority Houses

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Two extensions were completed and this completes the extensions programme.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Extensions will continue to be funded through the Council's Internal Capital Receipts Programme subject to availability of funding.

(3) Remedial Works

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Scheme Housing Remedial Works include external refurbishment, internal refurbishment in some dwellings, and associated site works to include front and rear boundary walls, existing road resurfacing and landscaping. A Remedial Works project had been approved for Plunkett Park, Ballygar and Ahascragh and works are now complete.
- A Rural Houses Remedial Works Programme which covered 163 houses in 9 lots

has been approved by the DOEH&LG. The total cost of the programme is estimated to be €5.2m. Works are ongoing.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Rural Houses Remedial Works Programme will be completed in 2010.

**Affordable Housing**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Currently there are approximately 546 applicants on the Affordable Housing Register. Affordable units are allocated in accordance with the Scheme for Affordable Housing, which was adopted by the Council. To date 237 Affordable Houses have been allocated. The Council is facilitating the provision of Affordable Housing in Gortnahown, Athenry through the Affordable Housing Initiative. This development is now complete and sale of the houses are in progress.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- It is the Council's intention to continue a smaller programme of Affordable Housing. For the most part this will consist of sales of already contracted Part V units. The Housing markets and the economic climate are unstable and this programme will require very cautious management over the next two or three years.

<b>HES 2: HOUSING STRATEGY</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 53 houses have been acquired for *Affordable Housing* under Part V of the Planning Act as amended, 2002 to date
- 75 houses have been acquired under Part V for *Social Housing*
- Formal agreements are in place for the acquisition of a further 170 units of social and affordable.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Formalize liaison with Planning Unit to ensure all relevant developments comply with Part V and meet with developers to pursue agreements
- Maintain Part V developments to assist with financial programming of the Capital Budgets.

<b>HES 3: VOLUNTARY HOUSING</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The scheme provides for non-repayable loans to approved Voluntary Housing Bodies for the provision of accommodation for renting to the elderly, handicapped, homeless or other categories of persons in need of accommodation.
- The following shows projects progressed and completed to date in respect of the Capital Assistance Scheme and Capital Loans and Subsidy Scheme.  
*Raheen, Athenry – 20 Units*

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The following Voluntary projects are at Discussion/Planning stage:  
*Letterfrack, Conamara - 20 units*

<b>HES 4: MAJOR EMERGENCY PLAN</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Major Emergency Development Committee (MEDC) and Major Emergency Implementation Team (MEIT) were established by the Council as part of New National Framework. The Council recruited a new Asst CFO (MEM) Regional for preparation of regional plans and ongoing roll-out of new major emergency management Framework regionally including Seveso II emergency plans. The risk assessment process to enable the write up of new major Emergency plan was completed and the new format Major Emergency Plan for Galway County Council 08-09 was issued in Sept 2008 as per Department target.
- Galway Co Co Headquarters has been selected as the location of Local Co-Ordination Centre for the three Principal Response Agencies – Galway City/County Council; HSE West and Galway Garda Division - for Major Emergencies in the Galway City and County area.
- A fit-out for County Hall to cater for its role as the emergency co-ordination centre was completed in 2009. This was funded by the DEHLG.
- A table top exercise for the Seveso offsite Major Emergency Plan for the new Topaz Oil depot in the City – which is a statutory obligation under Seveso II Regulations – was completed in early 2009 in conjunction with other local partner Principal. Emergency Services, the City Council, Topaz and the Galway Harbour Authority.
- A table top exercise for Galway Airport was completed in late 2009 in conjunction with other local partner Principal Emergency Services, the County Council, and the Galway Airport. The new local co-ordination centre was used as part of this exercise.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Ongoing training and testing of personnel in their various new roles as allocated in Major Emergency Plan and validation of new plan is envisaged in 2010.
- Work on the Regional Major Emergency co-ordination plan is ongoing
- Council personnel will continue to support regional steering group and regional working group committees.
- Work on a major exercise in the city will be progressed subject to financial resources.

<b>HES 5: FIRE PREVENTION AND EDUCATION PROGRAMMES</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Processing Fire Safety Certificate applications, inspection of buildings as part of annual Licence applications, dealing with prioritized complaints as described above.

- The schools Fire safety programme was not rolled out in the City and County in 2009 due to constraints on resources.
- Self contained smoke alarms with long life batteries were issued for 1000 houses in the County for installation by community groups. This project was completed with the assistance of the CEED Unit.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- It is hoped to have the schools programme restarted in 2010 involving local fire officers visiting 4<sup>th</sup> class in a number of national schools in Galway City & County and delivering a national fire safety message as per Fire Services Change Programme subject to financial resources.
- 2000 self contained Smoke alarms units are to be procured for installation in 1000 houses selected by Community & Enterprise Section in the City and county respectively in 2010 as part of ongoing the Fire Service Change Programme
- A Fire Safety Scheme will continue to be delivered to all inhabited offshore islands including training and provision of fire extinguishers to selected households.

<b>HES 6: FIRE OPERATIONS</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Fire Brigade continue to attend at emergency incidents in the City and County as in previous years and the number of emergency calls attended is broadly the same as previous years
- All the retained fire stations and the City fire station have migrated to the Computer aided mobilising project (CAMP) system in Castlebar by June 2009. The watch room in Galway City was closed as part of this process.
- The Council is committed to endeavouring that all of its Fire and Emergency Services personnel receive continued training as in previous years at local level and also officer training with the Fire Services Council.
- Training was carried out with new working at heights equipment for all personnel retained and full-time in 2009.

*Proposals for 2010:*

**CAMP WEST**

- The Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal and the HSE West are involved in this Central Call Out and Communications Project. The Council's contribution towards the operation of the system in 2010 is same as 2009 approximately.

**Regional Critical Incident Stress Management (CISM) Project**

- Galway County Council is the contracting authority to roll out the CISM Critical Incident Stress Management system to the Fire Authorities of Connacht and Donegal. Tenders for the project were sought and awarded in late 2008 to Staffcare in Northern Ireland and the project will be rolled out again from 2009-

2011. Provision are been made in 2010 budgets to continue this project with Galway County Council acting as the contracting authority.

## **Operational**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- There are **10** Fire Stations in the County located at Athenry, Ballinasloe, Clifden, Galway City, Gort, Loughrea, Mountbellew, Portumna, Tuam and Inis Mór.
- The Council employ **160** personnel directly in the Galway Fire Service including full time and retained fire –fighters in the City and County and senior fire officers and civilian support personnel in the Galway City Fire station.

During **2008**, the fire service responded to a total of **1983** emergency incidents, 963 by the County Brigades & **1020** by Galway City Brigade.

The number of emergency calls expected in 2009 is broadly in line or below 2008 calls

- The Council will carry out, in association with Galway City Council, a review of the requirements and resources of the City and County West fire fighting requirements. This review should be completed by mid 2010.
- The Council have trained up all operational personnel in 2008 and has rolled out the New National Incident Command System in early 2009 as per Fire Services Change Programme under Health & Safety Remit in retained stations. The Roll-out of NICS is under discussion with the union for the fire station in Galway City.
- The Council intend to implement its new Ancillary Safety Statement for Fire Service adopting the new national template as part of Fire Services Change Programme under Health & Safety remit with Asst CFO assigned to it's implementation in 2010.
- The Council intend to continue to prepare pre-fire plans for City and County risks with an asst CFO assigned to the city and another assigned to the county for this statutory duty.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Towards the latter part of 2009 the opening of the M6 Ballinasloe to Galway City will bring additional requirements for the Fire Service, protocols and procedures at an interagency level will become more challenging.
- National SOG'S will SOP'S will form the backbone for our training plans throughout the City and County to all fire personnel at the end of 2009 and largely during 2010.
- Department approval has been sought for special purpose appliances namely "Special Purpose Vehicles" an ET and an ALP in support of the growing risks associated with road incidents and rescue from high rise buildings.
- A strong focus will continue in 2010 in the qualification of all of our front line drivers in a "defensive driving training" programme. This will be completed during 2010.
- The role out of the new Health & Safety Statement will be a key element of our safety plan for 2010. The resources and training schedule of the plan, its implementation and verification on the ground in advance of a likely H&SA audit to the Fire Services.
- A Preliminary Report for the construction of a new fire station for Tuam has been prepared and sent to the Department of the Environment Heritage and Local

Government for their approval. It is hoped that this scheme will go to construction in mid to late 2010.

<b>HES 7: FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATES AND FSA 1981 INSPECTIONS</b>
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- In 2008, the Fire Service fire prevention staff carried out **336** inspections of premises as part of its Fire Prevention Function, under the Fire Services Act 1981, Licensing Acts, , Planning Acts, Dangerous Substances Act and **700** inspections for the issue of Fire Safety Certificates under Building Control Act 1990 The Fire section processed **415** public licence applications and dealt with **319** planning applications in 2008.
- The Fire Department dealt with **460** Fire Safety Certificate Applications in 2008 under Building Control Regulations, **274** in the County area and **186** in the City Area.
- Fire safety certificates are down in 2009 on 2008 levels. Two asst cfo's have been assigned to operational work as outlined above and existing ass cfo's (prev) are carrying out more existing building inspections in lieu of reduced FSC Applications. This will continue in 2010.
- Revised Building Control Regulations came into to force in late 2009 which will increase workload of fire prevention staff in 2010.

<b>HES 8: LOANS AND GRANTS SCHEMES</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009/2010:*

- Nine projects have been completed in 2009.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- There are no improvement works in lieu approved for 2010 - this Programme has been discontinued due to budgetary constraints as it is dependent on the level of funding generated from the Councils' internal receipts programme.

**Tenant Purchase & Annuity Loans/Shared Ownership Loans:**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The level of activity on the Shared Ownership Scheme and Housing Loans to date are as follows:

	<b>Tenant Purchase</b>	<b>Housing Loans</b>	<b>Shared Ownership</b>
Applications Received	1	3	0
Loans Approved	1	0	0
Loans Paid	5	0	0

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Funding is provided by way of borrowing from the Housing Finance Agency. The capital allocation for loans will be notified by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in mid 2010.

## **Home Choice Loan**

Home Choice Loan is a mortgage provided nationally through four local authorities for First Time Buyers who can not get sufficient finance from a bank or building society. Galway County Council is one of the four designated Local Authorities and will provide mortgages to all counties in Connaught and also Cavan, Monaghan and Donegal. Home Choice Loan will provide up to 92% of the market value of a property purchased, to a maximum of €285,000. The loan is a normal Capital and interest bearing mortgage which is repaid on a monthly basis. The mortgage term will be for a maximum of 30 years. Home Choice Loan will only be available for newly built and self build homes. Further information on Home Choice Loan can be found on [www.homechoiceloan.ie](http://www.homechoiceloan.ie)

## **Housing Aid for Older People, Mobility Aids Grants, Housing Adaptation Grants**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Disabled Persons Grant and the Essential Repairs Grant have now been replaced by three new grants in Housing; the Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability, the Mobility Aids Grant Scheme and Housing Aid for Older People. The level of activity under these schemes are as follows:

<b>Disabled Persons Grants</b>	
No of applications paid	135
Value of applications paid	€728,778
<b>Essential Repairs Grants</b>	
No of applications paid	106
Value of applications paid	€365,942
<b>Mobility Aids Grants</b>	
No of applications received	43
No of applications approved	62
<b>Housing Adaptation Grant</b>	
No of applications received	130
No of Applications approved	134
<b>Housing Aid for Older People</b>	
No of applications received	183
No of applications approved	116

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Commitment to continue administration of the grants schemes subject to the availability of the necessary funding.

## **Private Residential Tenancies Board- Registration of Rented Units**

*Indicative Activities in 2009*

- The Residential Tenancies Act 2004 came into operation on 1st September, 2004. Part 7 of this Act deals with the registration of tenancies with the Private Residential Tenancies Board. The published register is available on the Private Residential Tenancies Board website at [www.prtb.ie](http://www.prtb.ie)
- Galway County Council inspected 395 properties from January 1<sup>st</sup> to Sept 30,

2009, to ensure compliance with standards for rented houses and issue of rent books. 200 Properties failed to meet with the current standards & notification has been issued to the relevant Landlords to carry out the appropriate repairs. The main areas where properties have failed to meet the standards are due to lack of Fire Blankets; Smoke Alarms; Lagging Jackets on Hot Water Tanks and no Extractor Fans over cooking areas.

*Proposals for 2010:*

*On-going inspection of Private Rented Properties to confirm compliance with current Standards for Private Rented Properties & Issue of Rent Books.*

### **Rental Accommodation Scheme:**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

Number of applicants in receipt of rent supplement	Estimated 650 – Awaiting updated figure from DSFA
Number of contracts agreed with private landlords since commencement of Scheme	196
Number of applicants accommodated to date	342

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Commitment to process eligible applicants under the scheme and source accommodation in order to meet standard of transferring maximum number of persons to GCC

## **HES 9: TRAVELLER ACCOMODATION**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Traveller Accommodation Programme for the period 2009-2013 was adopted by Council at their meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> January 2009. As part of the preparation of the Programme, an assessment of need based on existing and projected need was carried out which concluded that approximately 225 households would have a housing need over the course of the Programme. The Programme sets a target of housing 105 households over the course of the Programme. The final reporting on the previous Traveller Accommodation Programme for 2005-2008 showed that the target in the programme of housing 113 households was exceeded by providing accommodation for 128 households. Following local elections throughout the year, a new Local Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (LTACC) was established. In addition, members of the National Traveller Accommodation Consultative Committee (NTACC) conducted site visits to traveller-specific accommodation in County Galway during the year.
- The Annual Census of Travellers was carried out in November 2009. The number of families in County Galway is 544 of these 20 are on unauthorized sites.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will review its progress in achieving targets in the 2009-2013 Programme.

Meetings of the LTACC will be arranged to discuss progress and any issues surrounding the overall management of traveller accommodation units.

## **HES 10: HOMELESSNESS**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- A total of 37 persons presented as homeless to the Housing Unit in the year to date. In the vast majority of these cases and following full assessment of circumstances, emergency accommodation is provided until the person is able to secure alternative accommodation.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Funding has been provided in the budget which will allow the continued provision of emergency accommodation where required.

## **H 11: ESTATE MANAGEMENT**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Funding for estate management initiatives was used to bring about improvements in the Council's Housing Estates in consultation with Resident Associations established by the Housing Liaison Officers. The Housing Unit investigated breaches of tenancy, in liaison with An Garda Síochána as appropriate, and took disciplinary action against tenants in these cases.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Housing Unit will continue to deal with all complaints of anti-social behaviour and breaches of tenancy. In accordance with Section 35 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provision) Act 2009 the Council will be required to prepare an "Anti Social Behaviour Strategy". This will be done in 2010.

## **HES 12: HOUSING MAINTENANCE**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 516 maintenance requests were received up to 3rd December, 2009 of which 209 were carried out.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Response maintenance will continue subject to the availability of funding.

## **HES 13: CORPORATE SUPPORT**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Two meetings of the Housing SPC have been held to date and a further meeting will be held in December.

<b>H 14:            CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>
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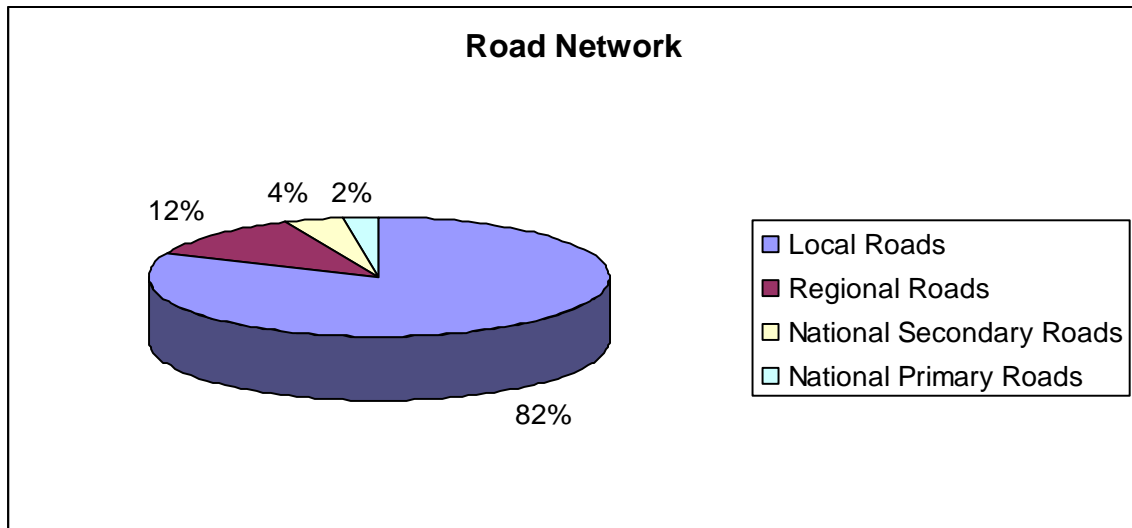
*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Arrangements for payment of rent by BillPay are being finalised which will facilitate the payment of housing rent at any Post Office and increase the number of automated payment facilities available to tenants, which is necessary as part of restructuring of the revenue collection function. During the year, a revised assessment process was introduced for social housing applicants in order to ensure that applicants who are also applying for rent supplement are approved as soon as possible.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Unit will continue to develop and improve its use of ICT across all its functions particularly in those areas which improve the level of service to its customers.

## ROADS & TRANSPORTATION UNIT



While the 2010 Road Grant<sup>1</sup> allocations are not yet available, this does not affect the consideration and adoption of the budget as the same figures are reflected on both the expenditure and income side.

### RT 1: NATIONAL ROADS

The total revised grant allocated by the National Roads Authority in April 2009 for the year was **€154,494,897**. The grant allocation divides as follows:

<b>Improvement Works</b>	<b>€152,040,000</b>
<b>Maintenance Works</b>	<b>€ 2,454,897</b>

#### National Roads Major Projects:

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

Significant funding was provided in 2009 to facilitate the continued advancement and delivery of the Major Inter Urban Routes element of the National Development Plan 2007 – 2013 & Transport 21. The following projects are managed by the National Roads Design Office and the costs associated with this programme are recouped in full from the National Roads Authority:

National Road No.	Route Section
M6	Athlone / Ballinasloe
N6	Galway City Outer Bypass
M6	Galway / Ballinasloe
M17/18	Gort / Tuam (incl Tuam Bypass)
M17	Tuam to Claremorris
N59	Maigh Cuilinn Bypass

<sup>1</sup> The Roads Programme 2010 will be circulated when the Year 2010 Road Grants are notified to the Council by the National Roads Authority.

- Construction work on the M6 Galway to Ballinasloe (PPP) Scheme continued during 2009 with the official opening taking place on Friday, 18<sup>th</sup> December 2009.
- Work continued on the N18 Gort – Crusheen Scheme by the SIAC/Wills JV.
- The M6 Ballinasloe to Athlone Motorway was opened on the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2009.
- The M18 / M17 Gort to North of Tuam PPP Scheme is at the tender stage with an anticipated Tender Award scheduled for October 2010.
- The An Bord Pleanála decision on the N6 Galway City Outer Bypass was appealed to the High Court. A further appeal is pending to the Supreme Court.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Construction work will continue on the N18 Gort to Crusheen Scheme with the opening of the Scheme anticipated for Summer 2010.
- The National Roads Design Office shall continue to advance other projects including the M17/M18 PPP Scheme and the N6 Galway City Outer Bypass.

**National Primary & Secondary Roads:**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme for National routes was undertaken in accordance with the budget for maintenance works notified by the National Roads Authority.
- A full programme of Pavement & Minor Improvement works was undertaken on the National Primary & National Secondary Road network with a grant allocation of **€5,775,000**.
- The new bridge on the N59 at Leenane was officially opened by the Mayor of the County of Galway on the 30<sup>th</sup> March, 2009.
- A programme of works to reinstate the N6 Haul Roads commenced in late 2009 with an initial allocation of **€1,500,000** from the National Roads Authority.
- In the context of the extreme flooding experienced in late 2009, the National Roads Authority allocated initial additional funding in the amount of **€760,000** to address essential and priority maintenance requirements on the National Primary & Secondary Road Network.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme incorporating ordinary maintenance, surface dressing, winter maintenance, bridge maintenance and traffic route lighting maintenance will be undertaken within the limits of available funding from the National Roads Authority.
- The programme of works to reinstate the N6 Haul Roads will continue in 2010.
- In addition, a full programme of Pavement and Minor Improvement Works will be undertaken on the National Primary and National Secondary Road Network in the context of the 2010 grant allocations from the National Roads Authority.

<p><b>RT 2:           TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT, SMARTER TRAVEL &amp; SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY</b></p>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

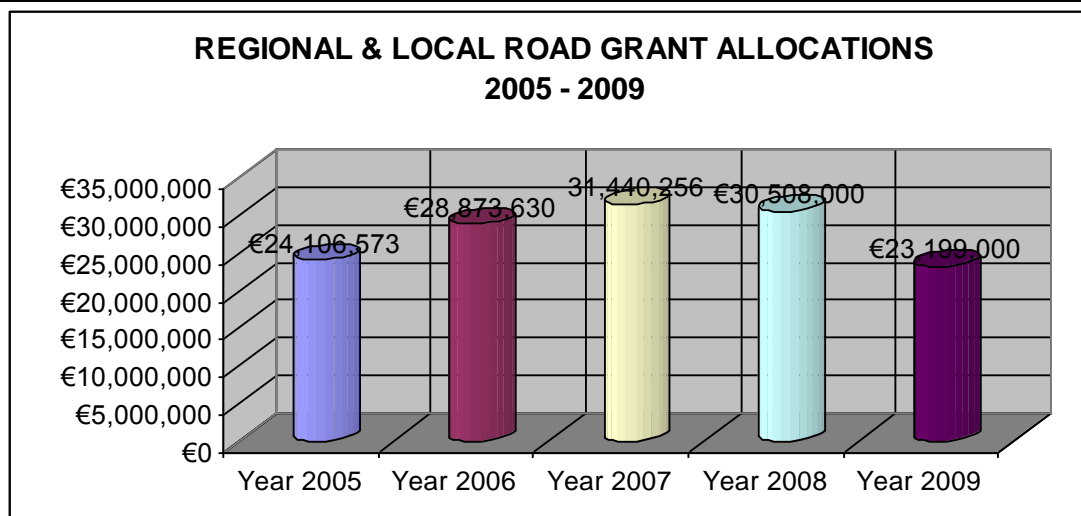
- The Road Traffic (Special Speed Limits) County Galway Bye Laws 2009 were progressed to adoption stage.

- The Council continued its proactive role in promoting sustainable mobility by delivering a programme of events to mark the first National Bike Week (14<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> June 2009) and European Mobility Week (16<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2009). The events were designed to encourage people to consider changing their travel habits to more sustainable means such as cycling, walking and public transport.
- The Council developed the R341 Clifden Cycle Lane as a permanent measure to mark European Mobility Week 2009 with financial support provided by Smarter Travel.
- The second phase of the N17 Baile Chláir Quality Bus Corridor opened for qualifying traffic.
- The Council in partnership with Galway City Council submitted an application under the Department of Transport's National Competition for Smarter Travel Areas in relation to the Galway Metropolitan Smarter Travel Area. In addition, the Council also submitted an application under the competition for Loughrea Smarter Travel Town. Both applications have been short-listed by the Department of Transport to proceed to Stage 2 of the competition involving the preparation of a detailed business case for each proposal.
- The Council's application for funding under the Smarter Travel Project Fund for the development of an Integrated Walking & Cycling Strategy for County Galway including the role out of a number of pilot projects was shortlisted by the Department of Transport and is currently the subject of discussions with the Department.
- The Council worked with the Galway Transportation Unit and Galway City Council in advancing a walking and cycling strategy for Galway City & Environs including Oranmore, Baile Chlair & Bearnna.
- The Unit continued to implement Road Works Speed Limits, in consultation with the Gardaí and the National Roads Authority, as deemed necessary to facilitate the delivery of the Council's various works programmes.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Traffic Management Plans will be advanced in respect of An Cheathrú Rua, Cleggan, Maigh Cuilinn, Headford & Portumna.
- Support the ongoing operation and maintenance of existing pay parking systems in Tuam, Clifden, Loughrea, Athenry & Gort.
- Implementation of Road Works Speed Limits as necessary to facilitate the delivery of the 2010 Roads Programme and other work programmes.
- Implementation of the Road Traffic (Special Speed Limits) County Galway Bye Laws 2009.
- The development of an Integrated Walking & Cycling Strategy for County Galway will be advanced in accordance with the guidelines agreed with the Department of Transport and Smarter Travel.
- The Unit will engage with relevant stakeholders in preparing the business case for the Galway Metropolitan Smarter Travel Area and Loughrea Smarter Travel Town for submission for Stage 2 of the National Competition for Smarter Travel Areas.

### RT 3: NON-NATIONAL ROADS



*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

The total grant allocation of **€23,199,000** for Regional & Local Roads divides as follows:

<b>Improvement Works</b>	<b>€15,383,000</b>
<b>Maintenance Works</b>	<b>€ 7,816,000</b>

The grant allocation can be classified under the following broad headings:

Grant Category	2009
Restoration Improvement Grants	€8,403,000
Restoration Maintenance Grant	€5,799,000
Discretionary Improvement Grant	€853,000
Discretionary Maintenance Grant	€2,017,000
Specific Improvement Grants	€2,745,000
Low Cost Safety Improvement Grants	€220,000
Regional Roads Signposting Grant	€124,000
Footpaths Tuam (FTC)	€144,000
Footpaths Loughrea (FTC)	€144,000
Strategic Regional & Local Roads (SNNR) Grant (National Spatial Strategy)	€2,750,000

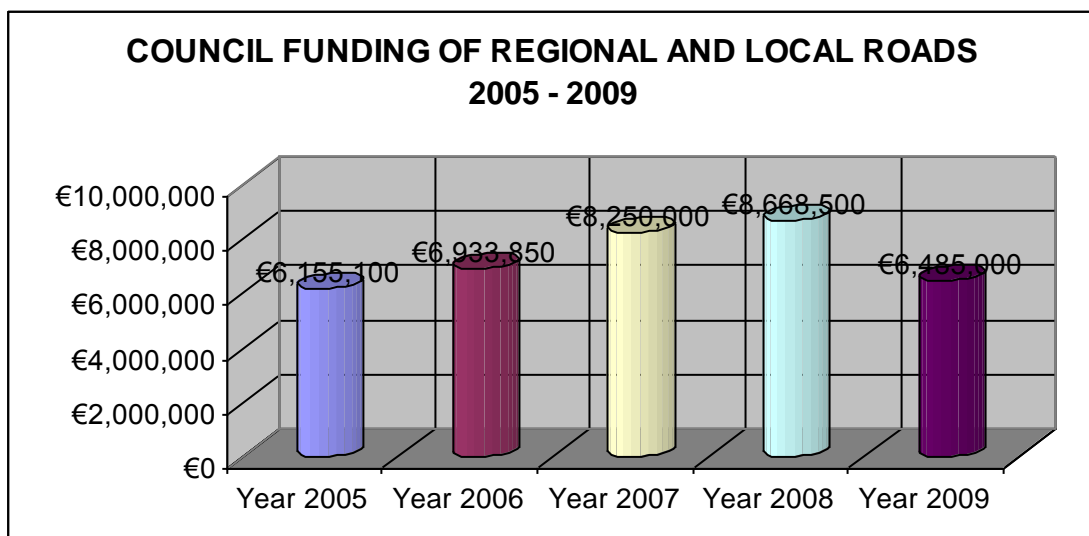
- The following roads were allocated **€2,745,000** funding under the Specific Improvement Grant Scheme during 2009:

R342 Tombeola	R332 Tuam / Kilbannon/ Kilmaine
R339 Galway / Monivea	L4202 Knockaunloughla Bridge
R336 Béal Atha na mBreac & Leenane	L4219 Roo Bridge
L1313 Tulaigh Mhic Aodháin	Raford Weir Bridge
R336 Bearna	Oxgrove Bridge
R340 Attry/ Cashel	L4312 Tynagh Village
R343 An Cheathrú Rua	R339 Carnmore / Monivea Road
R349 Riverville Bridge (lower)	
R328 Moylough / Clonberne (Clonkell Bridge)	

- A grant in the sum of **€1,500,000** was provided under the Strategic Regional & Local Road Schemes (National Spatial Strategy) for the Conamara Access Road (R336 Bearnna to Scriob via Ros an Mhíl). The route selection process which incorporated public consultation sessions was in progress during 2009. It is anticipated that the Route Selection Report will be completed in the first quarter of 2010.
- A sum of **€1,000,000** was provided for the Athenry Northern Ring Road and a grant of **€250,000** was provided for the Baile Chláir Relief Road (Design Stage).
- The Raheen Link Road, Athenry constructed at a cost of **€1.2 million** was officially opened by the Mayor of the County of Galway on Friday, 6th November 2009.
- The annual resurfacing and maintenance programme for Regional & Local Roads funded by the Department of Transport was completed with a budget of **€7,816,000**.
- The annual programme of improvement works to Regional and Local roads funded by the Department of Transport, and in accordance with the 2009 Roads Programme, was carried out with a budget of **€12,345,000**.
- Improvement works were undertaken on the following roads under the strategic roads programme funded by An Roinn Gnothaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta.

R340 Doire Inbhir – Cill Chiaráin	Ardmore – Carna
Baile na Cille	LP1302 Corr na Mona – Cloch Breac

- The Department of Transport in response to the extreme flooding experienced in late 2009 facilitated the Council in allocating an element of the Restoration Improvement Grant to undertake essential interim maintenance and reinstatement works on the Regional & Local Road Network.
- The Unit commenced a detailed analysis of the impact of the extreme flooding on the transportation infrastructure across the County with a view to this information forming the basis for a detailed submission to the National Roads Authority / Department of Transport for additional funding to target locations, roads, bridges identified in the analysis as requiring attention.



The sum provided from the Council's resources in 2009 was €6,485,000. The Local Roads General Maintenance allocation of €3,540,750 provided a unit allocation of €649 per km.

The sum of €3,540,750 was allocated as follows:

(1)	Local Roads Verge Trimming	€200,000
(2)	Local Roads Drainage	€100,000
(3)	Local Roads Renewal & Provision of Signage	€100,000
(4)	Local Roads General Maintenance	€2,750,500
(5)	Local Roads Winter Maintenance	€190,250
(6)	Local Roads Bridge Maintenance	€200,000

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The 2010 Roads Programme will be drafted having appropriate regard for the emerging priorities arising from the impact of the extreme flooding on the road network and road drainage system.
- The Unit will continue to actively engage with the National Roads Authority/Department of Transport to secure such funding as is necessary to deliver a programme of remedial measures on the road network to minimise or eliminate the impacts of future flooding.
- The Unit will prepare the 2010 Roads Programme in the context of available funding from the National Roads Authority, Department of Transport and the Council's own resources and present the Programme to Council for approval in early 2010.
- The distribution of the Local Roads Budget will be presented to Council for approval in the context of the 2010 Roads Programme.

#### **RT 4: MARINE WORKS**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

##### **Strategic Piers and Harbours:**

Progress was achieved during 2009 in advancing the programme of works under An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta Strategic Piers & Harbours Programme. Some notable milestones included:

- A feasibility study was completed in regard to the Caladh Mór Phase III Harbour Development, Inis Meáin and a planning application is currently being prepared for submission to An Bord Pleanála.
- Planning documentation was completed in regard to Cé Ard Thoir, Carna in anticipation of approval from An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail, Tuaithe agus Gaeltachta to process with a Part 8 Planning Application.
- Work is progressing on the development of Cill Rónáin Harbour with an anticipated completion date of 2010. The project with an estimated cost of approximately €40 million represents the highest ever spend on island infrastructure in the history of the State.

## **Small Piers and Harbours**

The Council carried out the following works under the Fishery Harbour Programme which was funded by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food with a contribution from the Council:

- Underpinning works to Parkmore Pier, Kinvara.
- Completion of improvement works to Wallace Quay Pier.
- Completion of repair and maintenance works to Bearna Pier including improvements to aid navigation and pier access in advance of the Volvo Ocean Race.
- Completion of repair and maintenance works including improvements to pier access to Spiddal Pier.
- Completion of repair and maintenance works to the main slipway at Inis Óirr Harbour.
- Repair works to the slipway at Cora Point, Inis Meáin.
- Port waste receptors were installed at harbours as required by the Port Waste Regulations (S.I 117).

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Continue work on the redevelopment of Cill Ronáin Harbour, Inis Mór which is due for completion in early 2010.
- Progress the introduction of Harbour Bye-Laws for Inis Oirr, Caladh Mór, Inisbofin and Cleggan.
- Deliver a programme of work under the Small Piers and Harbours Programme within the limits of available finance.
- Continue to advance the Inis Óirr and Caladh Mór Phase III Harbour Development Project.
- Completion of improvement and safety works to pier at Cé Chorradáin, Carna by March 2010.

<b>RT 5: COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT SCHEMES</b>
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## **Community Involvement in Roadwork's Scheme**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Council continued to actively promote the Community Involvement in Roadwork's Scheme as a means of harnessing community support for road works on suitable local roads. A sum of **€206,837** was provided from the Restoration Improvement Grant with a further sum of **€233,991** from the Restoration Maintenance Grant provided a total budget of **€440,828** for the scheme.
- A total of **62** applications were received to avail of the 2009 scheme. Following assessment a total of **55** were recommended for funding with approval being granted for **43** schemes in 2009.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The 2010 Draft Roads Programme will include provision of funding to facilitate the operation of the Community Involvement in Roadwork's Scheme. The 2010 scheme has been advertised and following the assessment of applications,

proposals will be brought before the Council as part of the 2010 Roads Programme.

### **Local Improvement Schemes:**

#### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- In recognition of the opportunity provided by Local Improvement Schemes to provide assistance towards the construction or improvement of non-public roads, the Unit continued to actively promote this scheme during 2009. A grant allocation of **€924,000** was provided by the Department of Transport in 2009 which facilitated **41** schemes being offered during the year.

#### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will continue to provide resources to allow for the operation of the Local Improvement Scheme and in particular the ongoing assessment of applications received under the scheme. The number of schemes to be undertaken during 2010 will be determined by grant allocations.

### **Community Employment Schemes:**

#### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Council, in partnership with FÁS and the local community, continued to promote and encourage the development of Community Employment. Accordingly, the Council continued to sponsor the following schemes: Maigh Cuilinn / Oughterard, Laurencetown / Abbey, Gort and Environs, Tuam and Environs and Cloch na Rón / Clifden.
- A budget of **€1,500,479** was provided for the operation of these schemes with payroll costs being 100% recoupable from FAS and with specific allocations for materials and training.

#### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will continue to support Community Employment through the sponsorship of 5 Community Employment Schemes.

<b>RT 6: ROAD SAFETY</b>
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### **Road Safety Together Committee:**

#### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Road Safety Together Committee continued its active role in the promotion of Road Safety and held 3 meetings in 2009.
- The County Galway Primary Schools Cycling Championship took place on Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> September 2009. The event was organised by the Council as part of its programme of events to mark European Mobility Week.
- Galway County Council in conjunction with An Garda Síochána and the local emergency services hosted ‘Think Twice’ A Road Safety Awareness Event in Leisureland, Salthill with the aim of delivering a hard hitting road safety message to hundreds of Galway teenagers.
- Specific road safety initiatives undertaken by the Council during 2009 included:
  - Promotion of the Drive for Life Programme for Post Primary Schools.

- Support for the operation of the Junior School Warden Scheme.
- Support Cycling Safety Training Programme in national schools.
- The “Are you Daylighted” campaign was launched to encourage the motorists to use dipped headlights, while driving during daylight hours.

*Proposals for 2010:*

Publish the Road Safety Plan 2010 – 2012 which the Road Safety Together Committee will actively promote along with the following:

- Promote the expansion of the Junior School Warden scheme in conjunction with An Garda Síochána.
- Provide financial support for the operation of the Cycling Safety Training Programme (Primary Schools) and the Drive for Life Programme (Post Primary Schools).
- A Road Safety initiative for Post Primary Schools.
- Provision of armbands and reflective material to schools, youth and community groups without charge.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual County Galway Primary School’s Cycling Championship.

**Safety Improvement Works and Measures:**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

An allocation of **€220,000** was provided by the Department of Transport to enable low cost safety improvement works to be carried out on the following regional and local roads:

R339/LP3105 Cartymore Cross	€ 30,000
R336 Coláiste Lurgann, Inverin	€ 40,000
LP2115/2128 Curran’s Cross, Abbeyknockmoy	€ 30,000
R358/L7416 Junction at Mountain, Ahascragh	€ 30,000
R340/L2106 Junction between R340/L2106 at Carna	€ 30,000
R358 Pedestrian Crossing at St. Cuan’s College, Castleblakeney	€ 30,000
LP2141 Tullinadaly Hill, Tuam	€ 30,000

The National Roads Authority provided funding of **€65,000** for Safety Measures on the following National Primary & Secondary roads:

N6 RSRM Blackgarden Cross	€15,000
N18 RSRM Kilcolgan, N67 Junction	€30,000
N63 TC Moylough	€20,000

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will deliver a programme of low cost safety improvement works on Regional and Local Roads and programme of safety measures on the National Primary & Secondary Network within the available funding provided by the National Roads Authority.

## **Public Lighting:**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- A sum of **€631,500** was provided in the 2009 Budget to fund the cost of the public lighting programme including the maintenance/energy costs.
- In addition the National Roads Authority provided funding of **€156,000** for National Primary Route Lighting & **€44,800** for National Secondary Route Lighting.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- A sum of **€620,000** is provided in the Budget for the 2010 Public Lighting Programme. This budget provides for the maintenance/energy costs associated with the existing public lighting network.
- The Council intends to avail of the liberalisation of the electricity market for unmetered supply and the new code of practice developed for public lighting to issue tenders in regard to public lighting supply (energy) and public lighting maintenance in order to derive benefit from this new competitive market.

<b>RT 7: HEALTH &amp; SAFETY</b>
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### *Indicative Activities 2009:*

- The Council's pursuit of excellence in the area of Occupational Health & Safety was recognised in achieving the award of "Best Local Authority" in the National Irish Safety Organisation Awards (NISO). This is the fourth consecutive year that the Council has been recognised in the NISO Awards.
- New procedures were developed for Confined Spaces and Asbestos Management and training seminars for staff affected were held in four locations throughout the county. Other procedures advanced during the year included Disease Prevention, Maternity Leave Policy & Procedures and Lone Working.
- Training seminars also took place throughout the county for road workers for Signing Lighting & Guarding (SL&G) and Safe System of Work (SSWP) forms.
- Nineteen safety representatives from various parts of the county were appointed by the staff.
- Safety Statements were updated and reviewed.
- The Health and Safety Committee met regularly to promote and monitor pertinent issues.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council is committed to the OHSAS 18001 accreditation with the Housing Unit participating in the first phase. It is currently anticipated that the accreditation process for the Housing Unit will be completed by December 2010. Thereafter it is intended to achieve accreditation for the Roads & Transportation Unit in 2011, Water Services in 2012 and the remainder of the organisation by 2013.
- Advance procedures and general health and safety training.
- Continue proactive dialog with staff and safety representatives on safety, health and welfare matters.

- Review and update, as required, activity and static risk assessments and Safety Statements.

## **RT 8: CORPORATE SUPPORT**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee, under the Chair of Cllr. Sean Canney considered a number policy issues during 2009 including:
  - Control of skips on public roads.
  - Bye-Laws for the regulation of Harbours.
  - Financial outlook and policy implications – Roads & Transportation.
  - Effects of designated areas on infrastructure provision.
- The Unit continued to facilitate the Conamara Area Committee which held 8 meetings during 2009 dealing with a broad range of operational matters.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Unit will actively support the role of the Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee in policy formation and it is intended that the Committee will as a priority consider the issue of flood risk management in early 2010.
- The Unit will continue to work with the Members to ensure that the Area Committee system remains an efficient and effective model for addressing operational issues.

## **RT 9: SIGNAGE**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- A grant of **€124,000** was provided in 2009 by the Department of Transport to facilitate the completion of the Regional Roads Signposting Programme which began in 2003.
- Funding in the amount of **€100,000** was provided from the General Maintenance allocation for the provision and renewal of signage on local roads.
- In addition, funding was made available from the National Road and Regional Road Maintenance allocations for the maintenance and renewal of signage.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The 2010 Roads Programme shall include funding for the provision and renewal of signage on local roads.

## **RT 10: CUSTOMER SERVICE**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- During the extreme flooding experienced in late 2009, the Unit availed of [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) to provide detailed information including mapping of routes impacted by flooding, impassable roads, alternative routes etc. During this period the relevant web pages were viewed 47,000 times by 27,000 visitors to the site. In addition, the Unit provided a dedicated flooding information phone line and emergency number, which was operational outside of office hours including

weekends, providing information on the status of roads, protocol for evacuation and emergency accommodation.

- The Unit continued to avail of [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) throughout 2009 to provide a Traffic Information Service, providing information on traffic disruptions arising as a result of road works, temporary road closures, roadwork's speed limits etc.
- The Roads & Transportation Unit hosted Supplier Workshops to facilitate the operation of LAQuotes.ie as a means of submitting on-line quotations for supplies and services, plant hire and tool hire for 2010.
- The Unit operated an On Line Payment Facility to allow for the payment of Fixed Charge Notices (Parking Fines).

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Unit shall avail of the Roads & Transportation Strategic Policy Committee to review Routine & Preventative Road Maintenance Service Delivery Standards during 2010.
- The Unit shall continue to develop Customer Guides on services provided by the Roads & Transportation Unit and ensure that they are widely available in all office locations and on [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie)

<b>RT 11: WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Galway County Council and Galway City Council held a Joint Meeting of the Galway County & City Integrated Transportation Coordinating Groups comprised of representatives of various groups active in the City & Council having an interest in transportation related matters including Iarnród Éireann, Bus Éireann, An Garda Síochána, H.S.E. (West), Galway Rural Development Ltd., Meitheal Forbartha na Gaeltachta, Údarás na Gaeltachta, PAMBO, Galway Harbour Company and the Galway Trades Council.
- Galway County Council working in partnership with Galway City Council and the Galway Transportation Unit submitted an application under the National Competition for Sustainable Travel Areas for the Galway Metropolitan Smarter Travel Area, collaborated in the development of a walking and cycling strategy for Galway City & Environs and developed a joint Galway Programme for National Bike Week.
- The Council worked in partnership with relevant Government Departments, State Agencies, Voluntary Groups and the wider community in providing an appropriate, effective and timely response to the extreme flooding experienced across the County in November/December 2009. Arising from the flooding a Joint Working Committee was formed with the membership comprised of officials from the Council and Office of Public Works to identify priorities, funds and work programmes required to response to the flooding and to commence a remedial works programme.
- The Unit held 3 meetings with Údarás na Gaeltachta during 2009 which addressed a broad range of issues of mutual interest.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Roads & Transportation Unit will as a priority, continue to engage with the Office of Public Works through the Joint Working Committee and other relevant stakeholders including local communities, to address on a priority basis issues arising from the extreme flooding experienced in late 2009 with a view to implementing appropriate measures to minimise and in so far as it is possible prevent, a reoccurrence of such flooding.
- The Roads & Transportation Unit will lead the work of the Integrated Transport Coordinating Group during 2010 by facilitating meetings of the group and actively engaging with the various members of the group in formulating its work programme and advancing the County Galway CDB Transport Priority Actions 2009 – 2012.
- The Unit will continue to take a lead role in working in partnership with Galway City Council and the Galway Transportation Unit in advancing transportation related projects of mutual benefit to Galway County & City.

## ENVIRONMENT AND WATER SERVICES UNIT

Through the provision of essential water services and environmental infrastructure, the Council will continue to develop the county in a balanced and prioritised manner and in a way that meets the needs of communities and industries. Priority for the use and assignment of available resources in 2010 will be determined by the need to protect public health and the environment. Capital and revenue expenditure will be targeted at achieving further improvements in regulatory compliance in all areas of water and environmental management with particular emphasis on drinking water supplies.

A summary of the water services and environmental programmes planned for 2010 is set out as follows.

### Water Services Infrastructural Priorities

#### EWES 1: WATER SERVICES INVESTMENT PROGRAMME

##### Water and Wastewater Schemes completed or under construction

Carna/Cill Chiaráin Regional Water Supply Scheme	Completed
An Cheathra Rua Sewerage Scheme – Network	Completed
Headford Sewerage Scheme	Completed
Tuam RWSS, Extension to Clarinbridge	Completed
Tuam RWSS, Extension to Headford	Completed
Dunmore, Kilkerrin and Leenane Sewerage	Completed
Loughrea RWS, Extension to Craughwell	Completed
An Fhairce and Letterfrack Sewerage	Completed
Roundstone Water	Completed
Bearna Sewerage Scheme	Under Construction
An Fhairce/Cornamona WS Advance Works	Under Construction

##### Works on the following projects are due to commence in 2010:

Tuam Town Water  
Gort RWSS Phase 1 Advance works

##### Schemes at Contract Document Stage:

###### (A) Awaiting DOE Approval

Milltown/An Baile Chláir (Bundle)	Clifden SS Phase 1
Athenry Sewerage Scheme	Craughwell/Carraroe Bundle
Loughrea RWSS (Phase 2)	Loughrea SS
Glenamaddy SS Phase 1	Galway City Western Environs

## **(B) Schemes with Galway County Council**

Oughterard SS	Ahascragh SS
Casla RWSS	Newbridge SS
Tuam RWSS – Remainder of Phase 2	Ballymoe SS
Ballygar WS	Inish Mor WS
Mountbellew WS	Tuam SS
Dunmore/Glenamaddy RWSS	Gort SS
Kinvara SS	Corandulla SS
Mountbellew SS	Mountbellew/Ballygar
RWSS	
Galway Sludge Management	Eyrecourt SS
Glenamaddy RWSS	Woodford SS
Ballygar SS	Killimor SS
Kilkerrin/Moylough RWSS	Oughterard WS
Caltra/Castleblakeny SS	

### **Schemes at Preliminary Report Stage or Design Review Stage:**

#### **Awaiting DOE Approval**

Clifden SS Phase 2	Ballinasloe Main Drainage
Clifden RWSS	Corofin Sewerage
Tully Sewerage Scheme	Laurencetown Sewerage
Carna Sewerage Scheme	Inishboffin Water Supply
Cill Chiaráin	Clarínbridge/Kilcolgan
Sewerage	
An Spidéal Sewerage	Inish Oir WS
Gort RWSS (Phase 1)	Leeane WS
Portumna RWSS	Eyrecourt SS
Kilronan SS	Ballinasloe RWSS
Spiddal WS	
Kilconnell SS	
Clifden RWSS Phase 1 – 3	
<i>(Phase 2 includes Tully &amp; Letterfrack)</i>	
Galway East WWTW	

## **EWES 2: RURAL WATER PROGRAMME**

Although the level of drinking water quality compliance in the Group Water Sector is still lagging behind that in public supplies, progress continues to be made and further significant progress is expected in 2010, when the improvement works to facilitate a bundle of 44 Group Schemes is completed. A range of other initiatives will also be implemented including upgrade, taking in charge and connection of schemes to public water supplies.

Details	No. of GWS	Status as of 31/12/09
Group Schemes taken-in-charge	38	Complete
DBO 2 Group Scheme	45	Underway
Group Schemes with <b>private sources</b> whose solution is either connecting to Galway County Council public water pipes or disinfection only	50	Underway
Group Schemes <b>already connected to Galway County Council pipes</b> where solution is take schemes in charge or improve GWS infra-structure to a maintainable standard	34	Underway
Total	157	

A summary of expected expenditure in 2010 under the various group scheme headings is as follows:

	Projected Expenditure 2010
Subsidy	€1,850,000
Individual Wells	€45,000
DBO	€10,500,000*
Advance Works Contracts DBO	€9,500,000*
New Schemes	€1,250,000*
Upgrading of Schemes	€650,000*
Connect to Public Supply	€175,000*
Taken in Charge	€2,300,000
Small Schemes	€350,000

(\*denotes dependent on grant allocation from DOEHLG and is likely that no new group schemes or upgrading projects will commence in 2010)

### **EWES 3: WASTE MANAGEMENT INFRASTRUCTURE**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Council operates three recycling centres (Tuam, Clifden and Ballinasloe), and provides 91 Bring Bank Centres throughout the County for the collection of glass and beverage cans for recycling. Timpeallacht na nOileán operates an integrated waste management scheme for the Aran Islands, on a partnership arrangement with the Council. Approval was received for site acquisition for a new recycling centre at Casla .
- Galway County Council continued the implementation of the Local Authority Prevention Demonstration (LAPD) Programme. The Galway Waste Prevention Programme works with various businesses, communities and public buildings throughout the City and County, aiming to improve resource use by reducing the amount of waste arising, and the amount of energy and water consumed. To date, Environmental Audits and Reviews have been undertaken and Environmental Improvement Programmes have been prepared. Elements of these programmes are currently being implemented, in addition to ongoing training and awareness programmes.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Continue the operation of recycling facilities countywide.

- Progress the development of new Recycling Centre at Casla .
- Provide mobile hazardous waste & WEEE collections at targeted locations.
- Progress the implementation of waste collection bye-laws.
- Provide an education campaign in support of separate organic waste collection upon implementation of separate collection by private collectors.
- Examine options for the implementation of Bulk Waste collections at Recycling Centres.

#### **EWES 4: MANAGERIALS AND MAINTENANCE OF WATER AND WASTEWATER SCHEMES**

Operating and maintaining water services infrastructure is critical to ensure that the value of the initial capital investment is maximised and that quality standards achieved. As part of the process of moving to a more safety and quality led approach for water services delivery, a dedicated water networks management team was put in place in 2008. This will be strengthened further in 2010 when the water services and roads function at area level are separated into separated entities. The result will be a management and operational structure with dedicated responsibility for water services alone.

#### **Drinking Water Remedial Action Programme:**

In 2009 the council completed the tendering process for the Remedial Action Programme. Construction and upgrade works in the water supply schemes included in the programme has started already in the case of Gort and will commence for the balance of schemes early and throughout 2010. A summary of the schemes included in the programme together with cost and funding is set out in the following table.

**Schemes where approval has been confirmed by the DOE in letter dated 2nd December 2009.**

<b>Scheme Name</b>	<b>Tendered Rate + Non Con Costs</b>	<b>Approved Funding Dept</b>	<b>GCC Contribution</b>
Mid Galway	€ 694,821	€ 521,116	€ 173,705
Ballymoe	€ 390,417	€ 292,813	€ 97,604
Ahascragh	€ 520,987	€ 404,189	€ 116,701
Dunmore/Glenamaddy	€ 537,734	€ 365,136	€ 172,075
Williamstown	€ 550,118	€ 399,608	€ 137,530
Mountbellew	€ 481,618	€ 423,530	€ 57,794
Glenamaddy	€ 436,623	€ 327,467	€ 109,156
Ballygar	€ 379,994	€ 274,814	€ 94,999
Portumna	€ 100,093	€ 75,070	€ 25,023
Ballinasloe	€ 100,093	€ 75,070	€ 25,023
Oughterard	€ 100,093	€ 75,070	€ 25,023
An Spideal	€ 100,082	€ 75,061	€ 25,021
Inis Oir	€ 411,330	€ 279,866	€ 102,833
Inis Mor	€ 523,393	€ 362,483	€ 138,699
Kinvara	€ 474,641	€ 322,500	€ 118,660
Woodford	€ 481,577	€ 337,500	€ 120,394
Leenane	€ 561,462	€ 397,500	€ 140,366
Gort	€ 744,678	€ 608,247	€ 136,431
	<b>€ 7,589,754</b>	<b>€ 5,617,040</b>	<b>€ 1,680,605</b>

### Schemes awaiting DOE Approval

Scheme Name	Tendered Rate + Non Con Costs	Dept % of Costs	GCC Contribution
Kilconnell	€ 201,592	€ 153,210	€ 48,382
Inis Boffin	€ 905,437	€ 688,132	€ 217,305
Letterfrack	€ 425,299	335,561	€ 89,738
Kilimor	€ 393,518	€275,069	€ 118,449
Clifden	€ 449,362	€ 283,098	€ 166,264
Tully/Tully Cross	€ 633,946	€ 458,343	€ 175,603
Carraroe	€ 722,951	€ 570,408	€ 152,543
Rosmuc	€ 482,878	€ 370,850	€ 112,028
Ballyconneely	€ 255,040	€ 221,120	€ 33,920
Tir an Fhia / Leitir Mor	€ 431,765	€ 377,363	€ 54,402
	<b>€ 4,901,788</b>	<b>€3,733,154</b>	<b>€ 1,168,634</b>

### Wastewater Treatment Plants:

Regulations introduced in 2007 required that Galway County Council seek licences – or, in the case of plants less the 500 P.E., certification - from the EPA for all wastewater treatment plants and networks. All applications have now been made, 29 in total. While no licences have issued as yet, it is expected that they will give rise to the need for upgrades at several plants and a scheme similar to the Drink Water Remedial Action Programme may be needed for these upgrades to occur.

### **EWES 5: WATER CONSERVATION**

- To protect the substantial capital investment and promote environmental sustainability it is important to continue and expand the Water Conservation Programme. With funding assistance from the DoEHLG the Council has completed phase 1 of the programme at a cost of €2.36 million.
- Phase 2 of the programme is currently in progress with a currently approved budget of €5.84 million and is targeted for completion in the first quarter of 2011. Key targets for 2010 are:
  - Installation of bulk meters and valves to establish District Meter Areas (DMAs)
  - Installation of telemetry data loggers
  - Continue with active leakage detection and repair
  - Identify mains/schemes to be included under Phase 3 funding.

### **EWES 6: ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES**

#### *Indicative Activities in 2009*

- The Council issued enforcement notices and initiated prosecutions under Waste Management, Litter Pollution, and Water Pollution Legislation. To the end of November 2009, the Council issued a total of 119 enforcement procedures in relation to environmental pollution, while 49 prosecutions were initiated and 6

prosecutions were secured. In the same period, a total of 710 on-the-spot fines for litter were issued. In 2009, 214 letters were issued in relation to the Solvents and Deco Paints Regulations and 145 letters and 5 notices were issued in relation to discharge licences. New discharge licences were issued in relation to 9 facilities and 11 reviews were initiated.

- Contracts were put in place for drinking water, bathing water, river, lake and landfill monitoring in accordance with legislative requirements. Follow-up actions were taken in response to non-compliances.
- Twenty-two notifications of non-compliance in relation to drinking water were issued to the EPA and Boil Water Notices were issued in relation to five public water supplies. Public notices in relation to bathing water quality were issued and investigative monitoring was carried out as required.
- Approximately 150 facilities with discharge licences were inspected and 316 samples were taken at public wastewater treatment plants. Samples were analysed in the Environment Section laboratory.
- Six Blue Flags and five Green Coast plaques were awarded to bathing areas in County Galway.
- The Council inspected and audited the operations of selected waste collector permit holders and waste facility permit holders on a priority basis.
- The Mobile CCTV project to detect illegal dumping was extended to various locations throughout the County.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will continue to carry out investigations and monitoring under environmental legislation, in accordance with government policy and EPA directions, and take enforcement measures as required for non-compliance with environmental legislation.
- Required monitoring will be carried out in accordance with the relevant environmental legislation. The achievement of actions identified in the Litter Management Plan will be progressed.
- Mobile CCTV camera enforcement operations will be continued in 2010.

<b>EWES 7: MONITORING AND ENFORCEMENT MEASURES (WATER)</b>
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Regular monitoring of water services takes place to ensure compliance with the various statutory regulations covering drinking water, wastewater treatment plant discharges, bathing waters, river and lake waters. The frequency of sampling, parameters to be monitored and arrangements for reporting are set out in the relevant regulations. In addition to the range of water quality monitoring, the council also issues and monitors licences to discharge to waters and sewers and air emission licences and landfill sampling. From 2010 details of monitoring results will be publicly available on the council's website.

<b>EWES 8: PROTECTION OF NATURAL WATERS</b>
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The Water Framework Directive (WFD) requires a new approach to the management of rivers, lakes, groundwater and coastal water so that at least 'good' waters are achieved by 2015. The country has been divided into 7 River Basin Districts (RBD's)

for this purpose and in the case of County Galway it falls within both the Western RBD and Shannon RBD. As Co-ordinating Authority for the Western RBD, Galway County Council is responsible for production of a River Basin District Management Plan to cover the period 2009 – 2015. This plan will set out the current status of all waters in the WRBD, the objectives to be achieved and the measures that will be needed to achieve these objectives. In some cases the achievement of good status will not be possible by 2015 and alternative timelines will be suggested.

The draft Western River Basin District Plan was on public display in 2008 and the final plan will be brought before the council for adoption in June 2010.

## **EWES 9: DERELICT SITES**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Council is exercising its powers under the Derelict Sites Act 1990, in order to compel the owners of neglected, ruinous and unsightly buildings and land to take remedial action. There are currently 82 sites on the Derelict Sites Register.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Resources have been included in the budget for 2010 to support the ongoing work in relation to derelict sites. A review of all sites in the county will be carried out to update records and prioritise actions

## **EWES 10: BURIAL GROUNDS**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- There are currently 234 burial grounds situated throughout the County. The Council, with the participation of the many local burial ground committees, carry out works of maintenance and improvements.
- In 2009, burial ground extensions were progressed at Rinvile, Cloonkeenkerrill, Claregalway, Cummer, Kilcoona and completed at Kilchreest.
- Improvement works were supported at a number of burial grounds which included Reilig Realt na Mara, Killyan, and Shanaglish.
- An annual grant is provided to committees who maintain the burial grounds in their area. The amount of this grant was €450 and grants were made to 155 committees in 2009

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Limited resources have been included in the budget for 2010 to support the Burial Grounds maintenance programme.

## **EWES 11: ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION & AWARENESS**

### *Indicative activities in 2009:*

- The Assistant Environmental Awareness officer was involved in promoting environmental awareness through information meetings with community, voluntary groups and tidy towns committees. Press releases, advertising and radio advertising on environmental issues were produced and circulated.

- Waste minimisation information leaflet sent to all schools in conjunction with water conservation leaflet from water services unit.
- Ongoing involvement in the tidy town project noted increased success in competition.
- Ongoing implementation of the Green Schools showed an increase of 12 new schools to 143 being awarded the Green Flag. 88% of all schools are now involved in the programme.
- In conjunction with the DoEHLG, Galway County Council funded several community -based anti-litter initiatives.
- Increased use of the website for environmental awareness.
- Waste information booklet has been updated and is awaiting printing and distribution.
- WEEE collections were organised in areas not convenient to recycling centres.
- Liaised with Community and Enterprise unit, water services unit, Heritage Officer and the Biodiversity Officer on various environmental projects to highlight links and maximise budgets.
- An Energy Team was set up in 2009 to focus on energy efficiency across the whole organization. The team completed an Energy MAP training programme with SEI (Sustainable Energy Ireland) to develop an Energy Action Plan to be implemented in 2010.
- The Council completed a group electricity supply tender, in conjunction with 7 other local authorities, for the top 30 energy users during 2009 in an effort to reduce electricity costs. The electricity supply contract was awarded to Energia in September 2009.
- Reduction in energy costs have been observed towards the latter end of 2009 and are expected to continue into 2010.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Awareness campaign will continue with particular emphasis on further enhancing partnerships with community and voluntary groups and increased use of media, local press and the website for distributing environmental information.
- The Council's Energy Programme will be progressed during 2010.

<b>EWES 12: ANIMAL CONTROL &amp; WELFARE</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Animal welfare cases involving dogs, cattle and sheep were investigated in conjunction with Gardai, Dept of Agriculture and welfare groups.
- Standard Operating Procedures and reporting arrangements for the Dog Control Service were implemented.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- As well as continuing to improve the Animal Welfare service, it is planned to undertake an extensive dog-licencing campaign early in 2010.

## **EWES 13: FOOD SAFETY**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The council provides a Veterinary Public Health Inspection Service under the terms of its service contract with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland.
- There are 10 licenced abattoirs in the county and the licencing of these is the responsibility of the local authority. The council approves, registers and has responsibility for the day to day supervision of these premises. The council supervises 10 premises in both the city and county.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- Resources have been included in the budget for 2010 to continue this work.

## **EWES 14: CORPORATE SUPPORT**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Environment, Water & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee met three times during 2009. Discussion took place in relation to many issues at these meetings, including:
  - Water Services Remedial Action Programme
  - SPC programme of works 2010
  - Implementation and adoption of Western River Basin Management Plan

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- A schedule of SPC meetings and policy areas where agreed in December 2009.

## COMMUNITY, ENTERPRISE & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT UNIT

### CEED1: PROMOTING CO-ORDINATION OF AGENCIES AND IMPLEMENTATION OF GALWAY COUNTY STRATEGY

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

**Development of Galway County Development Board (CDB) and Inter-Agency Partnerships to ensure better targeting of resources.**

- CDB convened five times in 2009 and membership (36) was re-constituted post 2009 Local Elections.
- Galway **County Economic Forum** was established, chaired by County Manager. Proposals from the WDC (On Creative Economy) Marine Institute (SMART Bay) GMT Innovation Centre (Fostering Innovation) were considered.
- Joint Policing Committee for County was established and County Traveller Inter-Agency Group was renewed.
- SIM (Social Inclusion Measures Committee) endorsed Social Inclusion Plans of all Local Development Companies in the County and agreed priority actions focussing on Integration, Disability, Older Persons and Youth.

**Implementation of Galway County Strategy and Priority Actions.**

- New Priority Action Plan for 2009-2012 was agreed in May 2009.
- The Plan agreed **five strategic priorities and 54 projects** on development of infrastructure; sustainable economic development; making use of our indigenous resources; improving integration of community services and implementing of national priority actions that require co-ordination between public agencies at a County level.
- Project Leaders from CDB member agencies identified for each project; 80% of actions agreed to commence in 2009 have progressed.

*Proposals for 2010:*

**Support implementation of inter-agency actions and review impact.**

- Provide a point of contact, information and advisory service for CDB members, Chairs of CDB sub-groups and all Project Leaders on inter-agency work.
- Implement a new reporting and review system for priority projects and conduct research as required to assist the CDB.
- Promote work of the CDB and ongoing development of web-site.
- Lead on implementation of 10 of CDB agreed projects directly on behalf of Council.
- Continue to facilitate 5 CDB sub-groups and represent Council on four others.

### CEED 2: PROMOTING ENTERPRISE & SUPPORTING ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

**Implementation of the County Economic Strategy and provide supports for Community Economic Initiatives.**

- Co-ordinated the response of Enterprise Agencies to the closure of significant employer in Loughrea through the County Economic Forum.
- Supported and sponsored the Galway Science Festival.
- Supported Community based Economic Initiatives through the allocation €97,000 to 38 projects from Enterprise Centres; Tourist Offices; local shows; markets and tourism based events and activities. Supported Clifden Airshow and Farmers Markets.

**Progressed Tuam town as County Hub Town in particular with the establishment of Tuam as a Sustainable Town Project with SEI (Sustainable Energy Ireland)**

- €1.4 million secured from BMW Regional Assembly ERDF Gateways and Hubs Fund for projects in Tuam. Preliminary submission made to SEI in regard to Sustainable Town.

**Promoted County as an Enterprise Location and development of Broadband.**

- Upgraded business pages of [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie); Supported Galway Airport and Entrepreneurism Briefings with Enterprise Ireland, County and City Enterprise Board and the Chambers of Commerce.
- Working with '3' to assist in the rollout and promotion of the National Broadband Scheme.
- Point of contact for the *Look West* Campaign with the Western Development Commission.

**Facilitated Communities to develop community enterprise facilities.**

- Provided advice and grants to community groups in Headford and Tuam to develop facilities and supported Ballinasloe and Clonberne Centres to upgrade services and facilities.

**Advised entrepreneurs contacting Galway County Council on development supports.**

- Acting as a first point of contact in the Council for Business enquiries through the **Business Response Unit (BRU)** advising entrepreneurs on Enterprise supports available to them.

**Promoted County as Tourism Destination and developed new Tourism Products.**

- Invested 140k (60% funded by Failte Ireland) in new signed Historical Town Trails in Loughrea, Tuam and Clifden to be promoted in partnership with Failte Ireland West;
- Invested 32k new cycle loops linking Clifden, Cleggan, Ballyconneely and Roundstone to be promoted internationally with Discover Ireland.
- Progressed agreement on walking trail routes in Killary Harbour, Connemara and supported first phase research on old Clifden Railway as a walking & cycling route.
- Supported Galway East Tourism Ltd to promote its region nationally and worked with Galway Rural Development on action plan for Eco-Tourism in East of County.
- Worked in partnership with tourism business operators and support agencies in City and County Tourism Forum to agree shared plans and targeting of resources.
- Provided a point of contact in Council on Tourism development.

*Proposals for 2010:*

**Provide advisory and support service to help sustain local economic activity.**

- Promote Business Response Unit (**BRU**) as point of contact for businesses.
- Continued implementation of Galway County Council Economic Strategy
- Implement Tuam Hub Fund programme of works.
- Support initiatives/events that encourage Entrepreneurism and provide information seminars for business and communities about funding opportunities.
- Deliver programme of support for Community based Economic Initiatives.
- Undertake promotional activities highlighting Galway as an Enterprise Location and Tourism Location and promote recent investment in Tourism products by Council.
- Develop marine/coastal trail of County in partnership with Heritage Office.
- Support events that provide marketplace for Galway Companies (Food Fairs/Farmers/Town Markets).

<b>CEED 3: SUPPORTING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

**Provided advisory and support services to assist communities to develop their areas.**

- Invested €140,000 supporting 42 community amenity projects (focused on public amenities, disability access and improvements to fire safety in community facilities) Supported **Tidy Towns** groups (including County winners Abbey, Monivea and Milltown and Regional Bring Bank winner Oughterard).
- Implemented pilot Tidy Towns advisory scheme for five communities resulting in increased scores for each (Oranmore; Inis Méain; Caltra; Portumna & Mountbellew). Oranmore awarded National Endeavour Award.
- Completed ‘Audit of Community, Sports and Arts Facilities’ in County. Developed mapping with IT Unit of 332 facilities classified as Sport (209), Arts (7), and Community (116).
- Implemented National Pride of Place Scheme in County, supporting participation by projects in An Cheathrú Rua, Clonfert/Meelick, Inis Oírr and Lackagh.
- Delivered an updated Guide to Council Services entitled ‘Your Guide to our Services’.

**Supported networking of communities and youth organisations to promote active citizenship.**

- Worked with schools and youth organisations to further develop six Local Area Comhairle na nÓg youth networks at Electoral area level. Facilitated County Comhairle and participation of Galway County in national Dáil na nÓg.
- Liaised with HR on required Child Protection Policy for County Council and County Development Board and provision of relevant training for staff.
- Supported Community Forum Development Officer, development of local area fora in each electoral area and information service between state agencies with community forum members. Forum membership grew to 630 in 2009 with 90% on email.
- Supported election of Community Forum representatives to Local Development Companies, Council Strategic Policy Committees and to CDB sub-groups.

*Proposals for 2010:*

**Provide advisory and support services to sustain voluntary community activity and to improve local amenities and services.**

- Promote Council community services under a single programme title - PLACE (Partnership, Local Actions for Community and Enterprise Development).
- Continue to deliver advisory and information and support schemes to assist communities and work in partnership with Local Development Agencies.
- Support local communities to increase participation and their scores in National Tidy Towns Competition through advice, information and direct supports.
- Develop a Youth Section for Galway County Council web-site.
- Expand and further promote Comhairle na nÓg activities in each electoral area in partnership with Office for Minister for Children and Community Forum.
- Provide a system for communities to update a profile of their facilities on [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) to promote community infrastructure and use.
- Continue to support development of Community Forum at a local area level.

<b>CEED 4: SUPPORTING SOCIAL INCLUSION</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

**Provision of information and advisory service on Social Inclusion and development of Galway County Council Social Inclusion Unit.**

- Completed Staff Survey on social inclusion and produced Social Inclusion Handbook.
- Delivered multi-lingual Voter Awareness Campaign pre- local elections for members of new communities with Galway Refugee Support Group and Integrating Ireland.
- Delivered literacy awareness training in conjunction with National Adult Literacy Agency and County Galway VEC for 45 staff and 10 members of the Social Inclusion Committee.
- Facilitated a number of Council staff to complete Resource Training by the National Association of Traveller Centres (NATC) - '*Voice of the Traveller in the Irish Workplace.*'
- Worked with Equality Authority, IPA and Corporate Affairs (Training Officer) to deliver training sessions for Council staff focused on Equality and 'Stereo-typing'.
- Worked with the NYCI – National Youth Council of Ireland, to deliver '*Intercultural & Youth Work*' training in Westside Library to a number of Council staff.
- Reviewed Galway County Council Social Inclusion Strategy 2006-2009 -80% of 113 actions progress across the organisation.

**Implementation of projects to address needs of specific 'target groups & communities.**

- Supported the Rural Transport Programme for North and East Galway and assisted Planning and Roads in preparation of proposals to Dept' of Transport SMARTER Travel Schemes.
- Worked with the Fire Authority and Community Forum on Community Smoke Alarm Scheme. Resulted in delivery and installation of 650 sets of smoke alarms to be vulnerable members of the community, free of charge.

- Supported Traveller Programmes (Education/Health/Arts) in Portumna, Ballygar and Tuam in partnership with Housing and local organisations.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Promote Council activities addressing social inclusion under a single programme title called ‘**INCLUSION**’.
- Develop new Social Inclusion Strategic Objectives and an Annual Action Plan in consultation with staff and Members. Co-ordinate its implementation.
- Continue to provide advisory and research services on social inclusion and deliver activities to increase awareness among Council staff and elected members.
- Deliver projects to promote European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion 2010
- Support implementation of Galway Integration & Diversity Strategy with local partners. Secured offer of €40,000 in 2009 for this project from Office of Minister for Children.
- Social Inclusion Unit will on lead work with NALA and County Galway VEC on a ‘Plain English’ campaign to promote clearer communication with the public.
- Implement a pilot ‘social inclusion impact assessment’ project with Forward Planning and develop local indicators to measure impact of selected Council services on disadvantaged groups (elderly, disabled, isolated communities).

<p><b>CEED 5: SUPPORTING ‘RAPID’ AREAS – TUAM &amp; BALLINASLOE</b></p>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

**Provision of services to improve social and economic development in RAPID areas.**

- Supported RAPID Co-ordinators in both towns to provide ongoing advisory project management services to agencies and communities.
- Co-ordinators facilitated RAPID Area Implementation Teams (AIT) and sub-groups involving cross-section of agencies and community representatives to prepare Strategic Plans Community Safety & Anti Social Behaviour, Health, Family Support, Education and the Physical Environment and assisted in securing funding to deliver.
- Programme of community infrastructure projects delivered in partnership with Housing, Ballinasloe Town Council, Tuam Town Council and Area offices, including playground developments, estate enhancements and traffic calming measures.
- 30 local groups/projects were assisted using co-financing from Department of Community Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs Community Support Budget. Further 15 projects assisted in partnership with County Galway Local Sports Partnership.
- €110,000 in Dormant Account RAPID funding was secured for the Ballinasloe RAPID area. Twelve projects received allocations.
- RAPID Tuam worked successfully with GMIT to ensure delivery of Third Level Enterprise Programme on outreach basis in 2009 targeting 40 people including newly unemployed.

*Proposals for 2010:*

**Continue to provide services to target and access increased resources for social and economic development of Tuam and Ballinasloe.**

- Facilitate the inter-agency teams and provide continued support to local groups / agencies / networks to access funds from public, voluntary and private sources.
- Continue to work with local Town Councils and Tuam Hub Town Programme.
- Focus on Training and Employment issues in both Towns and provide referral and supports to those facing unemployment
- Progress development of RAPID Youth Plans and implement Physical Improvement Schemes and prioritised capital projects for both towns.
- Work with Local Development Agency for East Galway (GRD) to ensure prioritisation for RAPID areas in implementation of agreed plans.
- Continue to support project resourced by Dormant Accounts and Leverage funds for RAPID area. Continue to promote outcomes locally and provide RAPID newsletters.

<b>CEED 6: PROMOTING &amp; DEVELOPING ARTS ACTIVITY</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

**Provided supports for Arts activities and development of ‘creative economy’ locally.**

- Invested €71,000 (€40,000 Arts Act Supports, €21,000 Arts Programming and €10,000 Community Grants) to support 73 organisations to undertake festivals, events and to provide increased access to arts activity throughout the County.
- Supported development and promotion of new arts activity by 18 Artists resident in County by investing €30,000 on Individual Artist’s Bursary Awards.
- Provided an information & advice service to community groups, individual artists, Elected Members and other sections of the Council on arts activity.
- Completed delivery of County Council’s Strategic Arts Development Plan 2006-
- Supported access and development of projects in Public Health Facilities, Schools, and Communities and with ‘at risk’ youth groups using film, visual arts, theatre in partnership with other public and community groups and Arts Council funding of €85,000.
- Promoted development of Coole Park Arts Programme in partnership with NPWS and local groups to enhance use of this facility in SE Galway.
- Supported development of creative economy and [www.screenwest.ie](http://www.screenwest.ie) to promote County as a location for film production.

*Proposals for 2010:*

**Provide supports and services to sustain employment and participation in the Arts locally.**

- Provide ongoing support, advice and information to Arts Centres, individual artists, arts organisations and community and cultural groups as required.
- Develop Strategic Arts Plan for 2010-2012 and implement an annual action plan.
- Promote Galway as a Cultural County as part of Tourism and Economic promotions and further develop [www.galway.ie](http://www.galway.ie) as a resources to access arts information.

- Undertake project to promote art work created in past 10 years by residencies in Áras Eanna Arts Centre to increase local and international promotion of arts activity in County.
- Implement a Public Arts Programme based on available resources from Housing, Waters Services and Roads and Transportation, generated by the ‘*Percent for Arts Scheme*’;
- Work in partnership with Library Service to promote arts activity at community level.
- Develop programme to support expansion of Arts remit of existing community facilities identified in the Community Sports and Arts Facilities Audit 2009.

## CEED 7: LOCAL SPORTS PARTNERSHIP

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Sports Partnership Board (which includes 14 members organisations - 18 members) convened four times in 2009 to oversee investment of €143,833 from Irish Sports Council. (supports provided include 15k for Youth and Sports projects, 10k on Club Development).
- Core programmes of the Irish Sports Council -Buntús to primary and pre-schools rolled out. Nine Code of Ethics courses delivered throughout County targeting range of sports groups.
- Two programmes for Women in Sport delivered (Girls LEP Rugby in association with Connaught Rugby and Basketball in association with Barna Basketball Club and co-funding from HSE.
- Supported Hurling Development Officer in partnership with Council and GAA to increase participation in hurling in Gort, Tuam, Athenry, Loughrea, Ballinasloe and Clifden.
- Supported projects to enhance access to Sport including activity course for sufferers of Spina Bifida & Hydrocephalus; GOYA outdoor project in Kinvara and ‘*Youth in Action*’ projects in North Connemara in association with FORUM Connemara Ltd.
- €41,000 secured from Dormant Accounts for projects promoting sport in RAPID areas.

### *Proposals for 2010:*

#### **Enhancing participation in Sport throughout the County**

- Continue to deliver core activities of the Irish Sports Council locally.
- Promote cycle safety and activities to increase participation in cycling and walking as leisure activity.
- Implement the ‘Meet & Train’ projects under the Women in Sport initiative.
- Promote the Partnership through newsletter, website and in local media.
- Deliver the Buntús Start’ programme in association with the Galway City & County Childcare committee to encourage early access to sports.
- Implement FAI Development initiative in partnership with Council and the FAI to increase coaching of and participation in soccer in agreed communities in the County.

<b>CEED 8: QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY, CUSTOMER CARE &amp; ORGANISATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Prepared submission to the BMW Regional Assembly for funding to develop Wireless Hot Desks in Library Branches through County Galway in order to provide greater access to Broadband.
- Developed Co-ordinated Council participation in EU resource organisation – ERNACT and NASC.
- Delivered an updated Guide to Council Services entitled ‘Your Guide to our Services’.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Promote participation in EU networks NASC and ERNACT and develop projects to increase access to EU funding for Council services to communities and businesses.
- Implement agreed actions in Customer Service Action Plan and Irish Language Guidelines.
- Promote our community and business services under three main programme areas **BRU**, **PLACE** and **INCLUSION** to make it easier for the public to access our services.
- Implement ‘Plain English’ guidelines in communications with the public and on web-site.

## **PLANNING & SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT UNIT**

### **PSD 1: PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

#### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 2,101 planning applications have been received to date (14<sup>th</sup> November 2009).
- The County Development Plan 2009-2015 was adopted on 6 April 2009 and came into effect on 3 May 2009. A Strategic Environment Assessment Statement and Detailed Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive was also prepared prior to the adoption of the Plan.
- The published version of the County Development Plan 2009-2015 is now available. (CD versions and hard copies)
- The Galway County Council and Ballinasloe Town Council Joint Housing Strategy 2009-2015 was adopted on 6 April 2009.
- The County Development Plan, Housing Strategy and Strategic Environmental Assessment Report were translated into Irish.
- The Clifden Local Area Plan was drafted and adopted on the 25 May 2009.
- The Amendments and Material Alterations to the Draft Craughwell Local Area Plan were on Public display from the 12 June 2009 to the 10 July 2009. The plan was adopted by the Elected Members on the 7th September 2009. A Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening Report and Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive Screening Report were also prepared and disseminated to the Members.
- The Draft Ballinasloe Plan, the Manager's Report on the submissions received on the Ballinasloe Town Plan and Strategic Environment Report has been prepared and will be presented to the Elected Members of the Ballinasloe Town Council in September.
- The Ballinasloe Plan was adopted on 10<sup>th</sup> November 17, 2009 and will become effective in December 2009.
- Reports were prepared for the N6 Arbitration hearings in October.
- To commence the Review of the Oranmore Local Area Plan 2006-2012 / Garraun--to commence scoping for new Plan and SEA/AA requirements in October 2009
- To commence Traffic and Transportation management plans for Headford and Portumna in conjunction with the Roads and Transportation Section in September 2009.
- To set up Management tools for managing and assessing the need for Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive for plans, projects and planning applications on an ongoing basis-particularly for monitoring the cumulative effect of single houses in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Design and establish a set of tools, questionnaires, and information sheets to be used in Development Management to identify the need for HDA (Habitats Directive Assessment) for planning proposals – can be extended to potential developers for early identification of issues.
- To set up monitoring regime and tangible goal achievement identification system for the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015- to implement the objectives of the Plan.

- The Smart Travel Plan has been prepared in association with the Roads and Transportation Section and Galway City Council and was submitted for funding in October

*Proposals for 2010*

- To continue the implementation of the objectives of the Galway County Development Plan.
- To prepare a Development Contributions Scheme for the Bearna LAP area. Extend similar methodology to Craughwell LAP (when adopted) and to other LAP areas as Local Area Plans are reviewed.
- To complete the Eastern Environs Framework Plan (encompassing Oranmore, Garraun, Ardaun, Briarhill and northern environs of the City).
- To commence the Briarhill Local Area plan process
- Preparation of the Ardaun Local Area Plan, Strategic Environment Assessment Report and appropriate groundwork in conjunction with Galway City Council.
- To commence the review of the Athenry Local Area Plan 2005-2011 (prioritised due to the imminent opening of the M6).
- Preparation work on the variation to the Oughterard Local Area Plan 2006-2012 to commence when site for treatment plant is finalised
- Review of the Oranmore Local Area Plan 2006-2012 / Garraun and scoping for new Plan and SEA/AA requirements will continue throughout 2010.
- To commence the review of the Tuam Local Area Plan 2005-2011 (SEA scoping and preparation- to be adopted by 24<sup>th</sup> January 2011( 33 week timeframe) preparation to begin early in 2010.
- To prepare the Headford Road Framework Plan, SEA and AA scoping reports (in conjunction with Roads and Transportation Section and relevant stakeholders subject to proven need/demand)
- To prepare a revised Wind Energy Map and also a Wind Energy Strategy as per the objectives of the Galway County Development Plan 2009-2015
- Work on the Traffic and transportation management plans for Headford and Portumna in conjunction with the Roads and Transportation Section to continue in 2010
- Review of the County Development Plan and development of a strategy in relation to Flood Risk and Management to comply with the requirements of the Ministerial Guidelines.

<b>PSD 2: URBAN &amp; TOWN/VILLAGE RENEWAL SCHEMES</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Urban & Town Renewal tax-incentive schemes ceased in July 2006, and no further scheme has been approved to date.

<b>PSD 3: BUILDING CONTROL /TAKING IN CHARGE</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 629 commencement notices have been received to 15/9/2009.
- 132 Fire Safety Certificate applications were submitted to date. The unit has continued to monitor and process applications for the Taking in Charge of

Housing estates under the new guidelines for ‘Taking in Charge of Developments’ which were adopted by Galway County Council last year.

- 103 applications have been received in respect of developments to be taken in charge since 2004, of these, 34 have been recommended to be taken in charge.
- To date in the current year 6 estates were recommended by the Planning Department for Taking in Charge. The files were forwarded to the Roads Section for this process to be completed under Section 11 of the Roads Act 1993. Five Bonds have been released and a further 16 are under review. Twelve new applications for Taking in Charge have been received to date in 2009 and are under consideration.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- It is proposed to continue to assess and process taking in charge applications within available resources in 2010.

#### **PSD 4: ENFORCEMENT MEASURES**

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 191 No. of enforcement Notices to date
- 357 no. Warning Notices/Letters, to date
- 72 no files have been referred for legal action

*Proposals for 2010:*

- It is proposed to continue to provide resources to the enforcement team in 2010
- There are 2,683 Planning Enforcement Complaints.

#### **PSD 5: HERITAGE**

*Indicative Activities in 2009*

The Heritage Officer works to promote interest, education, knowledge and pride in the heritage of County Galway. While also seeking to facilitate appreciation and enjoyment of the National heritage and in doing so co-operate with other bodies in the promotion of its function. The Heritage Office is committed to providing high quality advice and promoting best practice on all matters relating to heritage issues both within the local authority and to the people and communities of the county. In addition to this she works on the implementation of the aims and objectives of Galway County Heritage Plan.

The following is a list and brief description of projects carried out in 2009

- Industrial Heritage Survey of Connemara;
- Traditional Boat Survey Phase 2 for County Galway;
- Graveyard Publication for local communities and the local authority; this is based on surveys that have taken place over the past three years.
- Conservation works to the North West Tower Athenry;
- People and Nature Galway County Biodiversity Project ongoing and have printed the County Biodiversity Plan.
- Galway County Heritage Awards;

- Identification of a Mechanism for the Integrated Management of Lough Derg; working in partnership with Clare and North Tipperary local authorities;
- Field Monument Advisor who is working in the Ballinasloe Electoral Area in 2009;
- Golden Mile Competition and calendar;
- Cúl – GAA Digital Heritage Project;
- Fado Fado Folklore Project;
- Clifden Railway Heritage Week.
- Printing of heritage leaflet for the Blue Flag Beaches;
- Genealogical Conference in Claregalway on 29<sup>th</sup> August 2009 this was done in partnership with the Western Family History Association;
- Involved in organizing Athenry Walled Towns Day on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2009;
- Stone Wall Workshop in Inis Oirr;
- Graveyard Seminar in Glenamaddy and involved in the North East Galway Graveyard Digital Mapping Pilot Project;
- ‘Big House Seminar in Fohenagh;
- Community Garden in Ballinasloe; this is being done in partnership with Galway Rural Development;
- Allocating €25,000 to Heritage Grant recipients;
- Pilot fieldnames project for Inis Mor, Williamstown, Oranmore, Kilchreest and Leitir Meallain.

#### *Proposals for 2010*

- The implementation of the Heritage Plan actions will continue in 2010 with a number of specific projects being brought forward to undertake. The number of schemes progressed will be dependent of the final budget allocation sought for 2010. The following is a list of project proposals for 2010:
- Golden Mile Competition and Calendar for County Galway;
- Digital Heritage Projects including a. *Our Schools a Living Heritage*; *Fado Fado* Folklore Project and Cúl the GAA project.
- Continuation of the Field Names Project.
- Continuation of the Graveyard Digital Mapping Pilot Project;
- Heritage Week Events and support community heritage events;
- Galway County Heritage Awards Scheme 2010;
- Community Heritage Projects;
- Stone wall survey and seminar;
- Graveyard Seminar;
- Printing of the remainder of the Heritage Brochures for the Blue Flag Beaches and developing associated materials.

#### ***Proposed projects that will be pending Co - Funding from the Heritage Council in 2010:***

- Athenry Town Walls Conservation Project;
- ‘*People and Nature*’ Galway County Biodiversity Project will be ongoing and a planned programme of works will emanate from this project;
- Industrial Heritage Survey for the Oranmore and Tuam Electoral Areas;

- Graveyard Publication – *The Treasures of the Graveyards of County Galway*;
- Develop of a coastal heritage trail in partnership with Clare County Council modelled on the East Galway Ecclesiastical Heritage Trail;
- Field Monument Advisor Project;
- Publication on the Heritage Boats of County Galway;
- Develop a guidance document for the development of River walks and workshop on same.
- Digital Folklore project and conference;
- Athenry Walled Town Day;
- Heritage Week Events;

<b>PSD 6: CONSERVATION</b>
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*Indicative activities in 2009*

- The core work of the Architectural Conservation Officer is to implement the provisions of Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000 and to promote and implement the policies of the County Development Plan 2009 2015 with regard to the architectural heritage.
- In 2009 an Architectural Conservation Area was identified, evaluated and adopted as part of the Local Area Plans for Clifden, Craughwell and Ballinasloe
- Input was made into approximately 150 reports on planning applications for works to Protected Structures and within ACAs.
- Pre planning advice and consultation on works relating to Protected Structures is provided to owners/occupiers of Protected Structures and those situated within an Architectural Conservation Area (ACA)
- Advice is available to sections within the local authority with responsibility for the architectural heritage, which includes bridges, graveyards, courthouses, and piers.
- New identifications continue to be made and included in the AIS database in response to queries from members of the public. Information gathered was made available to the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage Survey of County Galway in 2008 (west) and 2009 (east and south). This information is due to be published in 2010
- Monitoring the state of repair of structures included on Record of Protected Structures ( RPS) and where necessary making recommendations on the need for enforcement action
- Liaison is maintained with the Architectural and Archaeological Advisory Service of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government with regard to interventions to Recorded Monuments and to Protected Structures.
- Galway County Council hosted a US ICOMOS International Conservation Intern for the summer period. She carried out a pilot survey of 15 historic Gardens and Demesnes in cooperation with the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, using a database developed by that body.
- The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government allocation for the Conservation Grant Scheme for 2009 was €136,000, for which 30 applications were received . €27,200 was later added following representations. The total amount spent on conservation grants was €163,200 in 2009.
- Under the Civic Structures Grant Scheme for 2009 € 35,310 was allocated in 2009 for conservation works to structures with public access.

- Submissions were made to the World Heritage Site Nomination Process
- Ongoing involvement in and promotion of training for traditional skills practitioners.

*Proposals for 2010*

- Consequent to progress in 2009, funding will be sought from the DoEHLG in 2010 to aid in the conservation of Protected Structures throughout the county.
- Galway County Council support for the Building Lime Forum Publication is to be sought.
- Ongoing awareness raising of issues affecting the architectural heritage with owners/ occupiers and material suppliers and practitioners of traditional building skills

<b>PSD 8: CORPORATE SUPPORT</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 2 meetings of the Unit's SPC have been held to date. The main topics debated during the year included the review and adoption of the County Development Plan and the Ardaun Concept, Lough Derg Sustainable Marina, Recreational and Tourism Development Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines.
- A new Strategic Committee has just been formed and the following are the members:

Chair: Cllr. Michael Fahy

Councillors: Cllr. Jimmy McCleran, Cllr. Dermot Connolly, Cllr. Liam Carroll, Comh. Sean O'Tuairisg, Comh. Tomas O'Curraoin, Cllr. Geraldine Bane (Loughrea TC), Justin Molloy (CIF), Michael Naughton (GEAG), Ray O'Donoghue (Community & Vol), Michael Healy (Farming).

*Proposals for 2010:*

- A programme of work and meeting schedule for the Planning SPC will be agreed with the Chairman of the SPC early in 2010.

<b>PSD 10: CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- All referrals to the statutory bodies are now issued electronically apart from The D.O.E.H.L.G., N.R.A. and An Taisce who require hard copies.
- A new browser was introduced on the website that provides a wealth of information and a more efficient method of looking up planning applications

*Proposals for 2010:*

- This Unit will continue to meet its service delivery standards as set out in the Customer Service Action Plan.
- The Unit will continue to meet its statutory deadlines, and provide an effective customer service by improving the website, front-line service, and information sources/leaflets.
- The extension of time (EOTs) procedure will be reviewed.

## **CORPORATE AFFAIRS & CULTURAL UNIT**

### **CCA 1: LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME**

#### *Indicative in 2009:*

The positive experiences provided by the library service in 2009 were important during the negativity of an economic downturn.

- Across the county, libraries provided free events and free space to individuals and community groups including;
  - One Town – One Book project (Tuam)
  - East Galway Art Trail (East Galway Libraries)
  - Three Rivers Story-telling Festival
  - Reading Groups in 16 branch libraries
  - Hosting Con Tempo (music) and Over-the-Edge (poetry) monthly in Galway City.
  - 3,000 children participating in Summer Reading Challenge across the library service
- In our libraries, everyone, and especially the most vulnerable, the elderly, children, the unemployed and people who are alone have a welcoming environment.
- There are books, newspapers and CDs, as well as are internet access points, often help with free computer lessons, news of local talks and events, children's programmes and helpful lectures for different interest groups.
- In 2009 people took home 16% more books than they did in 2007.
- The traditional role of the public library - in buying on behalf of the community that which individual members could not personally afford – is more important than ever at a time when individual disposable incomes are being restricted.
- Despite staffing and financial difficulties the library service remained proactive and vibrant throughout 2009.

#### *Proposals for 2010:*

- In 2010 the library service will continue trying to build the best possible book collections in each branch library, seeking out books from the widest possible range of sources.
- A new Mobile Library will replace the existing old mobile library vehicle
- The new Branch Library in Tuam will open
- The Ballinasloe Library project will proceed to the next stages of Departmental approval.

### **CCA 2: RECREATION & AMENITY FACILITIES**

#### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Council provided funding to Athenry Arts and Heritage Ltd for the operation of the Athenry Heritage Centre in 2009. Aughrim and Gort Heritage Centres were opened during the summer season.

- The Department of Arts, Sports and Tourism, confirmed grant funding for Loughrea Swimming Pool and the Council is in consultation with the successful tenderer with a view to commencing construction of the facility.
- Under the Recreation and Amenity Framework €2m was allocated to 12 groups to develop community-based all-weather pitches and nine of these facilities have been completed to date at Belclare/Sylane, Headford, Oranmore, Confert, Skehana, Outhterard, Kinvara, Gort and Portumna. 8 groups received funding to develop walking routes and trails and 2 of these are complete. Further funding was allocated to 3 groups to develop passive recreation areas. Works have been carried out at Glinsk and Aughrim.
- As part of the Play Policy Galway County Council provided assistance to playgrounds through direct funding and provision of insurance during 2009 in Ballygar, Lettermullen, Carraroe, Dunmore, Kilconly, Leenane and Moylough.
- The operation of the Tuam Leisure Centre and Swimming Pool was tendered and a new operator was appointed.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will liaise with the successful tenderer with a view to commencing construction on the Swimming Pool at Loughrea.
- The Council will continue to implement the Recreation and Amenity Framework for the County to ensure completion of all projects funded to date.
- It is intended that a Recreation and Amenity Strategy for Galway County Council 2010-2015 will commence preparation later in the year.
- A new Combined Heat and Power Unit will be installed in Tuam Pool and Leisure Centre to improve energy efficiency.

<b>CCA 3: HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Estimated expenditure for 2009 is €14.5m, 2449 and grants were paid for the 2008/09 academic year.
- There was a 48% increase in new Higher Education applications for the academic year 2009/2010 up to the closing date of the 31<sup>st</sup> August, 2009.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will implement the scheme as directed by the Department of Education.

<b>CCA 4: COMMUNITY WARDEN SCHEME</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Environmental Enforcement including the issuing of Litter fines and notices under the Waste Management and Water pollution Acts – Seven hundred and eight Litter Fines Issued
- The Wardens assisted with Pay & Display and Traffic Management in a number of towns across the County.
- A New Dog Licensing Campaign involving over six thousand inspections around the County was carried out in 2009.
- There were 82 abandoned Vehicles Reports.

- There were over twelve hundred Casual Trading Licence Inspections carried out during the year
- Litter Pollution/Derelict Sites Surveys were carried out
- The tendering process was completed and new vans were provided for the Community Wardens.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- This unit will continue to co-ordinate the allocation of functions to the Community Wardens.
- Work will be completed on consideration of how this resource can best assist in meeting the objectives of the organisation.

<b>CCA 5: REGISTER OF ELECTORS</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Local and European Elections took place in June, 2009 and the Lisbon Treaty Referendum took place in October, 2009.
- The Register of Electors was published on the 1st February, 2009 and the number of people on this register is 130,110

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will publish the Register of Electors in accordance with statutory deadlines.

<b>CCA 6: CORPORATE PLANNING &amp; SUPPORT</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Ethics Register for Members and Relevant Staff was updated during the year.
- To date 4 meetings of the Corporate Policy Group have been held.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will update the Staff & Members Ethics Register and obtain Donations & Expenditure Declarations from Councillors.
- The Council will prepare and circulate a schedule for Council and SPC meetings.

<b>CCA 7: PROMOTING THE IRISH LANGUAGE</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Draft of new Scéim Teanga Údaráis Áitiúla Chontae na Gaillimhe 2009 – 2012 sent to An Roinn Gnóthaí Pobail Tuaithe & Gaeltachta for discussion and approval.
- Irish courses, language awareness and language support material made available to staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe to enhance the provision of services through Irish
- *East Galway Language Surveys Project* progressed with the launch and publication of *'The Use of Irish in Loughrea, Results of a Sociolinguistic Survey'* initiated to identify the Irish language needs of towns in East Galway.
- *Seoidín* - Collaborative project with Coláiste Chroí Mhuire, An Spidéal, An Chomhairle um Oideachais Gaeilge & Gaelscolaíochta and Údarás na Gaeltachta

in which a compilation of short stories in Irish were produced by students, teachers, parents for use by children in classes 5 & 6 to encourage and assist Irish language reading at school and at home.

- *Cear dlann Léitheoireachta do dhaoine óga* – Collaborative project with Coláiste Chroí Mhuire, An Spidéal & Gaelscoileanna in which 150 national school students from Cois Fharráige were brought to a reading symposium through Irish run by Transition Year students to encourage the reading of Irish.
- *Do Sheans ar CD 2009* - Annual collaborative awareness project with County Galway VEC and Gaeilge Locha Riach inviting national and secondary schools in East Galway to compose new songs in Irish or create new arrangements of traditional songs. The CD '*Ár Seans*' will be published in early '10.
- Ongoing cooperation with An Coimisinéir Teanga.
- Coiste Logainmneacha Chontae na Gaillimhe met on a monthly basis to deal with naming of developments and other placenames issues.
- Continued participation in the process for the preparation of a Language Plan for An Spidéal.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Complete agreement on and publication of Scéim Teanga Údaráis Áitiúla Chontae na Gaillimhe 2010 – 2013.
- Provide appropriate Irish courses, language awareness and language support material to staff of Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe to enhance the provision of services through Irish
- Continue participation in preparation of Language Plan for An Spidéal and encourage other Gaeltacht communities to undertake the same process.
- Continue with progress of East Galway Language Surveys Project.
- Commence the production of an Irish Language Activity Plan for Loughrea on foot of language usage survey.
- Continue with the Irish Language Awareness initiative in East Galway in collaboration with County Galway VEC and Gaeilge Locha Riach.

<b>CCA 8: I.T. DEVELOPMENTS</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The I.T. Section provides ICT equipment maintenance and support services throughout the Organisation. Considerable resources have been invested in the following projects in 2009.
  - Server virtualisation has been ongoing throughout the year with the aim of increasing resilience and uptime and reducing license & maintenance costs.
  - Buyout of Microsoft product licences has been complete before the end of 2009 and will reduce annual rental fees.
  - ICT infrastructure in the new Tuam Area Office was commissioned.
  - Development of a budget & estimate monitoring package.
  - A new intranet site was created and launched enabling staff to have easier access to internal information.
  - eMail archiving introduced to reduce data loss & counter the risk of data leakage
  - Implementation of a Case Management system for our legal department

- Database consolidation continues to reduce license overhead and improve maintenance and backup routines
- Analysis of Print Services costs & recommendation to reduce costs.
- Integration of Motor Tax network into Galway Co. Co. network thus reducing overall costs to the State.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Pilot deployment of thin client devices. Thin clients can provide a cheaper solution to desktop PC's in many locations.
- Continued server virtualisation.
- Implementation of LGCSB network security audit recommendations
- Tender for Managed Print Services and implement contract.
- Implement the Irish Transverse Mercator (ITM) Grid on mapping systems
- Improve online search capabilities for public and staff
- Support the implementation of a HR, Payroll & Superannuation system (CORE HR)

<b>CCA 9: INTERNAL AUDIT ACTIVITY</b>
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Internal Audit is an independent unit, attached to the Corporate Services Section, offering a consultancy service to management and the organisation as a whole. The Unit carries out audits and reviews through its annual audit plan, which is drawn up in conjunction with the management team and approved by the Audit Committee.

There is a five member Audit Committee in place who hold regular meetings to discuss and support the work of Internal audit inclusive of the implementation of recommendations made in internal audit reports. The Committee is made up of two Elected Members and three External Members.

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Nine Audits were completed from the 2009 Audit Plan.
- A Review of 2008 Audit Report recommendations were carried out and outcomes discussed with the Audit Committee
- Comprehensive quarterly checks are carried out on Development Contributions , PPI penalties & travel claims
- On going checking in revenue collecting areas.
- A number of comprehensive checks/reports were carried out at the request of Management
- Internal Audit web page now on Galway County Council Intranet site
- Work is ongoing on the preparation of a 3 year Strategic Audit Plan

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Preparation of the 2010 Annual Audit Plan.
- Completion of Audits and Reviews on areas as outline in the Audit Plan
- Completion of 3 year Strategic Audit Plan

## CCA 10: HUMAN RESOURCE ACTIVITY

### *Indicative Activities in 2009*

- Twenty three competitions were held during the year, involving a total of 294 candidates called for interview for various posts. Forty three persons were appointed up to September 2009, including promotions. The Department of Finance issued a Circular Letter in March 2009 advising that no offers of appointment, promotion or allowance for the performance of duties of a higher grade may be made from the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2009 without the approval of the Minister of Finance.
- In excess of 3% of Galway County Council's Total Payroll Costs has been spent on Training and Development in 2009, with 1658 training days provided by mid-November. Health & Safety training formed a considerable part of the 2009 Training Plan with some new courses being rolled out in 2009 as follows: Six 1-day Health & Safety at Roadworks courses were undertaken by 119 staff ; Chlorination training was undertaken by 78 staff; CSCS Location of Underground Services training was undertaken by 52 staff.
- A total of 227 staff undertook FAS Safe Pass renewal training. Ten employees are presently undertaking a Biodiversity/Natural Heritage training course. Energy Efficiency training and Energy MAP training was provided together with a series of Agresso training workshops held in Autumn 2009. Literacy Awareness training was provided to 44 staff.
- To date this year 57 employees have retired from the Council.
- The Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement Scheme was introduced by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in May 2009 offering staff an incentive to retire between the age of 50 years and 60 years. This Scheme allowed for payment of 10% of Gratuity at retirement and the remaining 90% balance payable when applicant reaches age 60. The full pension entitlements are payable immediately on retirement. Twenty applications were received under the Incentivised Scheme of Early Retirement.
- One working day, for outdoor staff, was lost to the Council through industrial disputes this year.
- Galway County Council has a number of Family Friendly Schemes in place including:
  - Employee Assistance Programme: A new confidential counselling service, an "Employee Assistance Programme" or EAP was made available to all Galway County Council employees, their spouses and dependants from 25th March 2009. QUINN-healthcare runs this service on Galway County Council's behalf.
  - Special Incentive Career Break Scheme: The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government introduced a Special Incentive Career Break Scheme in June 2009. Successful applicants for a career break under this scheme are paid an incentive payment of a third of gross basic pay to a maximum of €12,500, per year, for each year of the 3 year period of the career break. Four Staff Members are availing of the Scheme.

- Shorter Working Year Scheme: In June, 2009 the Shorter Working Scheme was offered to all staff members. This Scheme offers staff an opportunity to avail of varying periods of unpaid leave options. Twelve staff members availed of unpaid leave this year and twenty one staff members have applied to take unpaid leave under the Shorter Working Year Scheme in 2010.
- Cycle to work scheme: Under the scheme an employer may provide an employee with a bicycle and/or safety equipment up to a maximum value of €1000 without the employee being liable for benefit –in-kind taxation. The purpose of the scheme is to: to encourage more employees to cycle to and from work; to contribute to lowering carbon emissions; to reduce traffic congestion; and to help improve health and fitness levels. The scheme is being implemented under a salary sacrifice arrangement and the full cost must be recouped within a maximum period of 12 months and the salary sacrifice will be reflected in the employees pay over that period. Forty eight employees availed of the Scheme this year. The employer saves on employer’s PRSI on the value of the benefit (up to €1000) provided to the employee.
- Travel Pass Scheme: The Travel Pass Scheme was offered to Galway County Council employees in March, 2009. Galway County Council purchase an annual travel pass for the employee from an approved transport provider e.g. and the employee has a reduction in salary over a twelve month period in lieu of the provision of the annual Travel Pass by Galway County Council. The Travel Pass Scheme provides employees with a tax free benefit with up to 47% travel costs savings and the Employee will not pay PAYE or PRSI on the remuneration sacrificed. Galway County Council saves on employer’s PRSI on the value of the benefit (up to €1000) provided to the employee.
- A(H1N1) Influenza Pandemic: A staff guideline document was prepared and circulated to all staff in September, 2009. This document was prepared for staff to clarify occupational policies related to the virus.
- Travel Policy: A new Travel & Subsistence Policy was reviewed and agreed by Management and the Partnership Committee and circulated to staff by email in November 2009.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- As part of a National project Galway County Council has committed to the implementation of a computer based HR, Payroll and Superannuation System which will greatly assist in achieving the objectives of the HR, Payroll and Superannuation Departments of the Council.
- The 2010 Training Plan will focus on the delivery of mandatory Health & Safety Training including the renewal of FAS Safe Pass continuing in 2010.
- According to service records, a minimum of nineteen staff members will retire in 2010.
- The Time & Attendance System will be extended to the remainder of the Organisation.
- A revised Dignity at Work Policy will be produced and circulated to all staff.

## **CCA 11: LEGAL ADVISORY SERVICES**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Department provided legal services for all programme areas, including the purchase and sale of properties, conduct of litigation including District Court prosecutions, Circuit and High Court litigation, including judicial review. In particular, the compulsory acquisition and preparation for oral hearing and arbitration of lands required for inter-urban routes was a substantial area of work.
- A system of quarterly/bi-annual meetings was set up with all Units of the Council, in order to aid planning of work in progress and anticipated work.
- A new case management system was installed during the year.

### *Proposals for 2010*

- Quarterly/bi-annual meetings will be held with all units of the Council

## **CCA 12: OFFICE ACCOMMODATION**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009*

- Tuam Regional Offices were completed and opened in May, 2009.
- One of the three leases in Liosbaun was terminated with the transfer of staff over to our offices in Centrepoint resulting in a savings on rental charges.
- Use of the prefab in the lower yard to accommodate staff was discontinued and any maintenance contracts associated with it were cancelled.
- The lighting system was upgraded resulting in a more efficient system and a reduction in energy consumption. This resulted in a 3% to 4% saving. This coupled with other energy saving measures have achieved 15% overall energy consumption reductions in Aras an Chontae.
- The Council participated in a joint electricity tender which included a number of our larger offices. Resulted in a considerable cost saving.
- All maintenance contracts are being continually examined to achieve overall reductions in costs

### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will review all aspects of rental accommodation during the year and examine alternatives to reduce accommodation requirements where leases are due to expire.
- Feeding into the overall Energy Management Action Plan which will further reduce our energy consumption.

## **CCA 13: MANAGEMENT OF RECORDS AND ARCHIVES**

### *Indicative Activities in 2009*

- Monitored the environmental conditions of the archives and endeavoured to ensure their continued protection, preservation and management; despite storage facilities not meeting required preservation standards.
- Provided researchers with access to the archives and assisted with internal & external research queries.
- Processed & colour scanned valuation lists (Phase 3)

- Continued our programme of obtaining security backup & reference microfilm of collections
- Continued our programme of processing archive collections
- Managed conservation work of fragile items
- Provided records management advice and assistance to several sections, drafted & endeavoured to obtain agreement on file classifications and retention schedules for several.
- Continued the management of non-current record deposits to storage & record retrieval & returns: 943 from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2009 to date.

*Proposals for 2010*

- Process additional archive collections and continue to provide services to researchers
- Colour scan valuation lists (Phase 4)
- Continue the programme of providing security backup and reference microfilm of further collections
- Continue processing collections and manage conservation project
- Invest in software to provide an on-line Archive catalogue
- Continue to liaise with Sections to develop and implement file classification & record retentions schedules, and provide advice on records management best practice.
- Galway County Council will continue to avail of commercial storage for its non-current records, and manage the retrieval and return of records held in such storage.

<b>CCA 14: FREEDOM OF INFORMATION</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- 84 FOI Requests were received to date in 2009

*Proposals for 2010:*

- The Council will comply with our statutory requirements regarding FOI.

<b>CCA 15: WORKPLACE PARTNERSHIP</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009*

- Handling Significant Change through Partnership Forum (HSCTP) meetings continued. Completed phase two of three RTL Schemes in Oughterard, Loughrea and Oranmore.
- Bi-monthly publications of organisation newsletter.
- LANPAG Education Grant Scheme administered through the Partnership Committee.
- New Travel and Subsistence Policy agreed and implemented.
- Amendments to sick pay procedure agreed.
- Organisational Efficiency Effectiveness and Cost Reduction Partnership Working Group report agreed and presented to Management Team.

*Proposals for 2010*

- Implement the LANPAG Action Plan in relation to the LANPAG Strategy 2008-2011.
- Complete the Organisational Efficiency Effectiveness and Cost Reduction Project and BPM project.
- Further development of Partnership structures.

<b>CCA 16: CUSTOMER SERVICE</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Bi-monthly meetings of the Customer Services Officers Group, monitoring service delivery standards as set out in the Customer Services Action Plan 2005-2009.
- Customer Service Action Plan 2009 developed by Customer Services Officers Group identifying specific actions for the year.
- All relevant Council application forms completed to ensure consistency in design, layout and user-friendliness so that all forms comply with Irish languages obligations, accessibility requirements and best practice from a plain English perspective and posted on the Internet.
- Advance development on direct submissions for e-application forms.
- Enhanced Customer Service online comment system and monitoring of complaints.
- Ongoing monitoring of phone service to ensure compliance with service delivery standards.
- On-line Motor Tax facility set up on public access terminal in Aras an Chontae.
- Two public access terminals installed in Tuam and Loughrea Regional Offices.
- Extensive use of the public consultation system ECONET.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Launch new Customer Service Action Plan 2010-2014
- Co-ordinate implementation of the CSA Plan through the Customers Services Officers Group (CSOG) and facilitate CSOG bi-monthly meetings.
- Develop Annual Customer Services Action Plans
- Establish Area Offices Customers Services Sub-Group and extend service delivery in Loughrea and Tuam Offices.
- The Customer Services Officers Group to develop further initiatives in such areas as;
  - Internet and Intranet content and management
  - Servicing of area offices/customer service points
  - Development of e-application forms.
  - Communications

<b>CCA 17: DISABILITY ACTION PLAN</b>
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*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Ongoing implementation of the Disability Action Plan 2007 – 2015.
- Implementation of access improvement works delivered across the five Electoral Areas in twelve audited towns. The works included the provision of new

footpaths, pedestrian crossings & facilities, tactile paving, signs, drop kerbing, re-grading surfaces and disabled parking.

- Continuing investment in access to services through the purchase of audio books on compact disc and cassette and large print books.
- Additional signage to libraries.
- Continued investment in accessibility of the website.
- Purchase and installation of two new public access terminals.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- Continue implementation of the Disability Action Plan and allocation of funding from the National Disability Strategy to include ICT and training supports, access to buildings and customer services.
- Review and replace wayfinding and directional signage in selected area office and library locations.
- Continue to review and monitor the accessibility of all office locations and services and ensure implementation of accessible information policy.

## FINANCE UNIT

### F 1: CORPORATE SUPPORT

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The 2008 AFS was competed during the year, and presented to Council for adoption.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- This Unit will provide budgetary and financial information as required for relevant meetings of the Council & CPG

### F 2: MOTOR TAX & DRIVER LICENCING SYSTEMS

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The level of activity over the 3 Motor Tax offices in operation at Aras an Chontae, Ballinasloe and An Cheathrú Rua, to date is as follows:  
New Registrations issued: 3,300  
Motor Tax Transactions: 202,573  
Driver Licence Transactions: 29,855
- The total income from Motor Tax and Driving licence transactions to date is €34.1 a total of 34% of renewal reminders issued to customers via the Vehicle Registration Office in Shannon were processed on-line, representing a value of €17.4m.
- Of the motor tax transactions managed directly by the Motor Tax offices, 82% of applications were issued over the public counter, while 18% of applications were issued via post.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- This Unit will continue to operate the motor tax and driver licensing functions and implement new motor tax legislation proposed by the Government.

### F 3: FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

*Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- Implemented upgrade of Costing module in Agresso.
- Implemented upgrade to Receipting in Agresso.
- Commenced implementation of Billpay in Agresso.
- Efficiencies achieved re claims system for travel expenses.
- Efficiencies achieved re BUDGETARY Drafting system
- Examination of cost-saving measures using Agresso.

*Proposals for 2010:*

- This Unit will continue to train staff in Agresso, as required.
- Implementation of Billpay in Agresso.
- Introduction of facility to purchase stationery on-line.

- Continued examination of implementation measures throughout the organisation using Agressso and the Corporate Procurement Plan.

#### **F 4: REVENUE COLLECTION & DISCHARGE OF PAYMENTS**

##### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- This Unit implemented the rationalisation of the Revenue Collection function in 2009, with a reduction in Revenue Collector numbers to 7. This included the provision of office facilities and relevant training.
- This Unit implemented the collection of the Non-Principal Private Residence Charge, including direct processing of payments received.

##### *Proposals for 2010:*

- This Unit will expand in 2010 to include collection of all monies due to the Council, to include Rents, Planning Contributions and Fire Fees.
- This Unit will offer the option of payment using Bill Pay to Rents, Loans, RAS and Rates customers in 2010.
- This Unit will continue to implement the collection of the NPPR charge, to include compiling a list of relevant properties.
- This Unit will investigate the option of extending the online payments option to include Fire Service Charges.
- This Unit will continue to actively promote the use of automated means of payment to all the Council's customers.

#### **F 5: CUSTOMER SERVICE**

##### *Indicative Activities in 2009:*

- The Unit achieved a high level of compliance with its service delivery standard for processing motor tax postal applications within 3-5 days, with 98% of transactions being issued within 3 days.

##### *Proposals for 2010:*

- The Unit will introduce increased payment facilities for customers by the introduction of Cashdesk facilities in the Loughrea and Tuam Regional offices.