

Quality Assurance Report 2017

Issued by

Clare County Council

**Submitted to the National Oversight Audit Commission
(NOAC) in compliance with the Public Spending Code**

MAY 2018

Certification

This annual quality assurance report reflects Clare County Council's assessment of compliance with the Public Spending Code. It is based on financial, organisational and performance related information available across the various areas of responsibility.

Signature of Chief Executive:

Dated: 31st May 2017

Contents

Details	Page No.
1. Introduction	4
2. Inventory of projects & programmes	5
3. Published summary of procurements	6
4. Assessment of compliance	6 - 7
5. Summary of in-depth checks	8 - 9
6. Conclusion	10
Appendix 1: Self-assessment checklists 1 to 7	11 - 17
Appendix 2: In-depth reviews	18 - 43
Current expenditure being incurred	
• Payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre (MRCC)	
• Expenditure on the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP)	
Capital expenditure being incurred	
• Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing and Improvements to the R494	
Appendix 3: Inventory of projects and programmes above €0.5m	44

1. Introduction

Clare County Council has completed this quality assurance (QA) report as part of its ongoing compliance with the Public Spending Code (PSC).

The primary aim of the quality assurance process is to gauge the extent to which departments within the Council are meeting the obligations outlined in the Public Spending Code. Details of the Public Spending Code can be found on the website <http://publicspendingcode.per.gov.ie>

The Quality Assurance Process contains five steps:

- 1 . Drawing up inventories of all projects/programmes at different stages of the project life cycle in the subject reporting year.**
 - The inventory includes all projects/programmes with a value in excess of €0.5m, and is divided by whether the project/programme is expenditure being considered, expenditure being incurred, or expenditure recently ended.
- 2. Publish summary information on the Council website of all procurements in excess of €10m that occurred.**
- 3. Checklists to be completed in respect of the different stages, for capital and current expenditure.**
 - The checklists allow the Council and its departments to self-assess their compliance with the code. The checklist templates are provided through the PSC document.
- 4. Carry out a more in-depth check on a small number of selected projects/programmes.**
 - A number of projects or programmes representing 5% of capital spending 1% of current expenditure are selected to be reviewed more intensively.
- 5. Complete a short report for the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC)**
 - Includes the inventory of all projects in excess of €0.5m, the website reference for the publication of procurements above €10m, the completed checklists, the Council's judgement on the adequacy of processes given the findings from the in-depth checks and the Council's proposals to remedy any discovered inadequacies.

This report satisfies step 5 above for Clare County Council for 2017.

2. Inventory of Projects/Programmes

This section contains an inventory list of all projects and programmes at various stages of the project life cycle which exceed €0.5m. The inventory list (Appendix 1) is divided between revenue expenditure and capital expenditure and between the three expenditure lifecycle stages:

- Expenditure being considered
- Expenditure being incurred
- Expenditure that has recently ended

All relevant directorates/departments within Clare County Council were requested to contribute to the compilation of the inventory of relevant projects and programmes in their respective areas.

Included in the inventory are 41 capital projects in total being considered, ongoing, or completed in the year, amounting to €321m, and 44 current expenditure programmes, amounting to €110m.

Expenditure being considered

Three revenue expenditure items are included as 'being considered' in the inventory, because, in accordance with the code, the revenue budget *increase* between 2017 and 2018 exceeds €0.5m. These are: €634,061 increase on RAS (A07), €1,781,545 budgetary increase on Regional Road Maintenance and Improvement (B03) and €1,060,672 increase on Community and Enterprise Function (D06). The increases reflect programme expansion/increase (with associated increases in grant funding) in the case of RAS and regional roads, and a structural move of budget in the other case.

Appendix one also contains the details of the capital projects that Clare County Council was considering during 2017.

Expenditure being incurred

Appendix one also contains the details of all areas of expenditure with a value greater than €0.5m taken from Appendix 2 of the (unaudited) annual financial statements (AFS) for 2017, where expenditure was being incurred in 2017. The total value of the items current expenditure being incurred is €110m. The revenue expenditure relates to the normal day to day activities of the Council such as roads maintenance, housing stock maintenance, landfill operations etc. The capital items, in accordance with the code, are listed at full project value once expenditure has begun, and the total amounts to €321m.

Expenditure that has recently ended

No item of current expenditure is deemed to have ended in 2017 and three capital items ended in 2017.

3. Published Summary of Procurements in excess of €10m

The quality assurance process requires Clare County Council to publish all procurements in excess of €10m on our website. There were no individual procurements in excess of €10m during 2017 in Clare County Council therefore this step of the PSC does not apply to Clare County Council in relation to 2017.

4. Assessment of Compliance

4.1 Checklist Completion: Approach Taken and Results

The third step in the quality assurance process involves completing a set of checklists covering all expenditure. The high level checks in Step 3 of the QA process are based on self-assessment, in respect of guidelines set out in the PSC.

There are seven checklists in total:

Checklist 1: General obligations not specific to individual projects/programmes

Checklist 2: Capital projects or capital grant schemes being considered

Checklist 3: Current expenditure being considered

Checklist 4: Capital expenditure being incurred

Checklist 5: Current expenditure being Incurred

Checklist 6: Capital expenditure completed

Checklist 7: Current expenditure completed

A full set of checklists 1-7 was completed by Clare County Council. Each directorate and relevant department therein completed individual checklists, by using a self scoring scheme on various parameters within each checklist. Each question within each checklist is self-evaluated, in accordance with the code, using a 3 point rating scale where 1 signifies 'scope for significant improvement'; 2 signifies 'compliant but with some improvement necessary' and 3 signifies 'broadly compliant'. The checklists completed by various departments were compiled to create one scored checklist representing the Council overall. The compiled checklist for Clare County Council is set out in appendix 2. In addition to the self-assessed scoring, the majority of answers are accompanied by explanatory comment.

4.2 Main Issues Arising from Checklist Assessments

Checklist 1 concerns general obligations, outside of particular projects or programmes. The main comment arising from the completion of this checklist is the need to provide further training to more staff about obligations under the PSC. Clare County Council is broadly compliant.

Checklist 2 refers to capital projects/programmes that were under consideration. Clare County Council is broadly compliant.

Checklist 3 refers to current expenditure being considered. As three revenue programmes – RAS (A07), Regional Road Maintenance and Improvement (B03), and Community and Enterprise Function (D06) – show increases greater than €0.5m between the budget for 2017 and that of 2018, these increases are listed in the inventory. The increases reflect expansion/increase in the programmes and increases in funding/grant aid in the case of RAS and regional roads, and in the case of the community and enterprise function, the transfer of budget into this service area from a different service in 2017 arising from an internal structural change. The Council is broadly compliant.

Checklist 4 refers to capital projects/expenditure incurring expenditure.

Considerable liaison with sanctioning authorities applies to capital projects and liaison and oversight is exercised in relation to them, which funding drawdown relies upon. The Council is broadly compliant.

Checklist 5 concerns current expenditure incurring expenditure. The Council is broadly compliant.

Checklist 6 concerns capital projects/programmes and capital grant schemes discontinued and/or evaluated during the year under review. Three capital projects ended in 2017, two of which are annual programmes in the housing area, the third a once off recreation project. While much of this checklist was not applicable to the Council for 2017, further staff training in carrying out reviews after expenditure has ended would be useful.

Checklist 7 (current expenditure completed) deals with expenditure in excess of €0.5m incurred during the subject year, but which will not be incurred in future. This was not relevant to Clare County Council for 2017.

5. Summary of In-Depth Checks

For the 2017 quality assurance process, there was a requirement to carry out an in-depth check of projects amounting to 5% per annum for capital, and 1% per annum for revenue. One capital project and two revenue programmes were subject to an in-depth check and the actual percentage of project value subjected to in-depth check for this report exceeded the requirements for 2017. The capital in depth check represents 12.4% and the current check represents 1.3%.

Capital expenditure total inventory value 2017 €321,675,280 €321 million total			Current expenditure total inventory value 2017 Being incurred €110,157, 546 Being considered 634,061 A07 Being considered €1,781,545 B03 Being considered €1,060,672 D06 €113 million total		
	Value amount	% of capital inventory subject to 2017 in-depth check		Value amount	% of revenue inventory subject to 2017 in-depth check
			SICAP	€866,274	0.76%
Killaloe bypass/Shannon Bridge Crossing/R494 Improvements	€40m		Payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre	€669,000	0.59%
Total in-depth done	€40m	12.4%	Total in-depth	€1,535,274	1.3%
Total in-depth required		5%	Total in-depth required		1%

In-Depth Checks - Summaries

5.1 Payments to other Fire Authorities and the Munster Regional Communications Centre

The objective of the payments to other fire authorities current expenditure is to provide fire cover by other fire authorities which have a fire station nearer to parts of Clare than any fire station in Clare, thereby providing prompt and efficient response to fire incidents in those parts of Clare, and thereby complying with legislation. The objective of the payments to the Munster Regional Communications Centre is to enable the mobilization of fire brigades where they are needed and the provision of a radio communications network, thus complying with legislation. The key activities undertaken and service outputs are reported on regularly. The necessary data and information is available to enable the programme to be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date if required. The controls in place for the management and governance of the expenditure on payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre provide adequate assurance that there is compliance with the PSC to-date in relation to this current expenditure 'being incurred.'

5.2 Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme

The operation of the Social Inclusion Community Activation Programme (SICAP) is within the community and development function of the Council. A procurement for the delivery of the

programme took place and there is oversight and ongoing evaluation of performance against targets and objectives, with key performance indicator data also being produced.

The operation of the programme is managed through an information technology system (IRIS) which tracks activities and enables reporting on progress. There is regular reporting by the body delivering the programme (the Clare Local Development Company, or CLDC), and frequent oversight by the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) in the form of regular meetings during which the programme is reported on and progress evaluated. This allows Clare County Council, via the LCDC, to effectively manage the programme. The controls in place for the management and governance of expenditure related to SICAP provide adequate assurance that there is compliance with the PSC.

5.3 Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement

The objective of the project is to construct a new road bypassing Killaloe, a new bridge over the Shannon between Clare and Tipperary, and improvements to the regional road. This report deals with the appraisal stage of the PSC in relation to the project, under the category of 'capital expenditure being incurred' at a project value of €40m.

Following technical reports, a constraints study, public consultation processes, a number of route options were appraised and one route selected as the preferred route. There was in-depth appraisal, and multi-criteria and cost benefit analysis, and approval in principle to advance the scheme through the processes given by the sanctioning authority. The preferred route was subjected to an environment impact statement.

CPO and land acquisition activity was the principal work during the subject year under review, 2017. It is anticipated that consultants will be appointed and working on detailed design and tender preparation in 2018. The review completed for this report enables the provision of adequate assurance that there is broad compliance with the PSC in relation to this capital project.

Proposals in relation to inadequacies found during quality assurance process

The main issue arising from the completion of this report for 2017 concerns the wide range of expenditure across diverse departments and involving many personnel, particularly managers who have not had training on the PSC. This training should be delivered again and should be ongoing, in particular in the undertaking of appraisals, reviews and evaluations, based on relevant project scales and values. General project management training delivered to local authority personnel should include reference to and training in the specifics of the public spending code.

The multiplicity of projects at the various stages of inception, planning, design and implementation within Clare County Council prompted senior management to recently review matters relating to achieving uniformity and consistency in the management of capital projects and to embed principles, structures, methodologies and standards in this work. Senior management decided to establish a project management office, recommending

“..all capital spending and indeed certain current expenditure must ultimately be guided by the requirements of the PSC. Translation of the PSC into a more user friendly set of guidance notes tailored specifically towards the relevant project scales and consolidating the relevant requirements of the capital works management framework and other guidance where appropriate would assist in developing standardisation and consistency of approach in project management across the organization”.

The translation of the PSC into modules of project types and scales and the rolling out of training for more local authority personnel would be a further positive step in the development of a culture of compliance with the PSC.

6. Conclusion

The quality assurance report for 2017 provides assurance that Clare County Council is meeting the requirements of the PSC where they apply and is generally broadly compliant. It is important that more staff receive training on the requirements of the PSC in order for it to become embedded in the culture of the organisation.

Fiona Mooney
Internal Audit
Clare County Council

APPENDIX ONE Completed Checklists 1 to 7

Checklist 1 – To be completed in respect of general obligations not specific to individual projects/programmes.

General Obligations not specific to individual projects/programmes	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 - 3	Discussion/Action Required
1.1 Does the organisation ensure, on an ongoing basis, that appropriate people within the organisation and its agencies are aware of their requirements of the PSC (incl. through training)?	2	Yes, relevant staff have been notified of their obligations under the PSC, though requests for further/additional training were raised frequently during the compilation of this report.
1.2 Has training on the PSC been provided to relevant staff within the organisation?	2	In-house training session held in 2015. Some staff participated in training by DPER in Galway in June 2016. In-house briefing session to senior staff held March 2017. No DPER/NOAC training has been provided since the 2016 session that we are aware of. Project management training recently provided to Clare staff did not include information on the PSC. It is considered that more training is necessary. Individual training needs are identified via the PMDS process.
1.3 Has the PSC been adapted for the type of project/programme that your organisation is responsible for? i.e., have adapted sectoral guidelines been developed?	3	Yes. A guidance document has been developed for the PSC QA process, adapted to local government structures and approach. A revised document issued by the CCMA Finance Committee in February 2017.
1.4 Has the organisation in its role as Sanctioning Authority satisfied itself that agencies that it funds comply with the PSC?	2	Agencies have been advised of the requirements of the PSC.
1.5 Have recommendations from previous QA reports (incl. spot checks) been disseminated, where appropriate, within the organisation and to agencies?	3	Yes, previous recommendations have been submitted to the relevant sections.
1.6 Have recommendations from previous QA reports been acted upon?	2	Follow up audits are required to verify this.
1.7 Has an annual PSC QA report been certified by the organisation Chief Executive, submitted to NOAC and published on the organisation's website?	3	Yes, full report submitted within the time frame specified.
1.8 Was the required sample of projects/programmes subjected to in-depth checking as per step 4 of the QAP?	3	Yes, in the subject year 2017, the % requirements for in-depth check based on the inventory under step 4 were exceeded.
1.9 Is there a process in place to plan for ex post evaluations/post project reviews? Ex-post evaluation is conducted after a certain period has passed since the completion of a target project with emphasis on the effectiveness and sustainability of the project.	2	
1.10 How many formal post project review evaluations have been completed in the year under review? Have they been issued promptly to the relevant stakeholders / published in a timely manner?	N/A	No capital project concluded in excess of €20m where a post project review would have been required under the PSC.
1.11 Is there a process to follow up on the recommendations of previous evaluations/post project reviews?	2	Through previous quality assurance, commitment from management was obtained that personnel carrying out post project reviews would not be the same personnel as those who appraised the project in the first instance or who implemented the project. The development of a capital project office within this Council is likely to embed process for relevant projects.
1.12 How have the recommendations of previous evaluations/post project reviews informed resource allocation decisions?	2	

Checklist 2 – To be completed in respect of capital projects/programmes & capital grant schemes that were under consideration in the past year

Capital Expenditure being Considered – Appraisal and Approval	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 - 3	Comment/Action Required
2.1 Was a preliminary appraisal undertaken for all projects > €5m?	3	Yes.
2.2 Was an appropriate appraisal method used in respect of capital projects or capital programmes/grant schemes?	3	Yes, in conjunction with the relevant government department/agency.
2.3 Was a CBA/CEA completed for all projects exceeding €20m?	3	Yes.
2.4 Was the appraisal process commenced at an early stage to facilitate decision making? (i.e. prior to the decision)	3	Yes, in conjunction with the relevant government department/agency.
2.5 Was an Approval in Principle granted by the Sanctioning Authority for all projects before they entered the planning and design phase (e.g. procurement)?	3	Yes, approval to secure funding required.
2.6 If a CBA/CEA was required was it submitted to the relevant Department for their views?	3	Yes.
2.7 Were the NDFA consulted for projects costing more than €20m?	3	Yes
2.8 Were all projects that went forward for tender in line with the Approval in Principle and if not was the detailed appraisal revisited and a fresh Approval in Principle granted?	3	Yes
2.9 Was approval granted to proceed to tender?	3	Yes
2.10 Were procurement rules complied with?	3	Yes
2.11 Were State Aid rules checked for all supports?	3	Not applicable to local government.
2.12 Were the tenders received in line with the Approval in Principle in terms of cost and what is expected to be delivered?	3	Yes
2.13 Were performance indicators specified for each project/programme which will allow for a robust evaluation at a later date?	2	As part of appraisal, most capital projects include measurable targets and objectives so that outputs and outcomes can be quantified and evaluated
2.14 Have steps been put in place to gather performance indicator data?	2	Yes – see comment above at 2.13.

Checklist 3 – To be completed in respect of new current expenditure under consideration in the past year.

Current Expenditure being Considered – Appraisal and Approval	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 - 3	Comment/Action Required
3.1 Were objectives clearly set out?	3	The additional expenditure was agreed as part of the budget process.
3.2 Are objectives measurable in quantitative terms?	3	Yes
3.3 Was a business case, incorporating financial and economic appraisal, prepared for new current expenditure?	3	
3.4 Was an appropriate appraisal method used?	3	
3.5 Was an economic appraisal completed for all projects exceeding €20m or an annual spend of €5m over 4 years?	NA	Expansion/addition to existing expenditure
3.6 Did the business case include a section on piloting?	NA	Nothing at level requiring a pilot.
3.7 Were pilots undertaken for new current spending proposals involving total expenditure of at least €20m over the proposed duration of the programme and a minimum annual expenditure of €5m?	NA	Expansion /addition to existing expenditure. Nothing at this level of value.
3.8 Have the methodology and data collection requirements for the pilot been agreed at the outset of the scheme?	NA	Nothing at level requiring a pilot.
3.9 Was the pilot formally evaluated and submitted for approval to the relevant Department?	NA	Nothing at level requiring a pilot.
3.10 Has an assessment of likely demand for the new scheme/scheme extension been estimated based on empirical evidence?	3	
3.11 Was the required approval granted?	3	Budget adopted by the members, also roads grants approved by Dept and rents recouped from Dept..
3.12 Has a sunset clause (as defined in section B06, 4.2 of the PSC) been set?	NA	
3.13 If outsourcing was involved were procurement rules complied with?	NA	
3.14 Were performance indicators specified for each new current expenditure proposal or expansion of existing current expenditure programme which will allow for a robust evaluation at a later date?	3	Yes, KPIs are applicable
3.15 Have steps been put in place to gather performance indicator data?	3	

Checklist 4 – To be completed in respect of capital projects/programmes & capital grants schemes incurring expenditure in the year under review.

Incurring Capital Expenditure	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1-3	Comment/Action Required
4.1 Was a contract signed and was it in line with the Approval in Principle?	3	Yes, where appropriate.
4.2 Did management boards/steering committees meet regularly as agreed?	2	Yes, where appropriate
4.3 Were programme co-ordinators appointed to co-ordinate implementation?	3	All capital programmes are managed by programme coordinators at a suitably senior level.
4.4 Were project managers, responsible for delivery, appointed and were the project managers at a suitably senior level for the scale of the project?	3	All capital programmes are managed by project managers at a suitably senior level.
4.5 Were monitoring reports prepared regularly, showing implementation against plan, budget, timescales and quality?	2	Project reports regularly prepared in most cases
4.6 Did projects/programmes/grant schemes keep within their financial budget and time schedule?	2	Where budget over-runs occur, documented explanations are available in progress reports and final reports and in most cases, sanction from the sanctioning agency is obtained.
4.7 Did budgets have to be adjusted?	2	Yes
4.8 Were decisions on changes to budgets / time schedules made promptly?	3	Yes
4.9 Did circumstances ever warrant questioning the viability of the project/programme/grant scheme and the business case incl. CBA/CEA? (exceeding budget, lack of progress, changes in the environment, new evidence, etc.)	N/A	No
4.10 If circumstances did warrant questioning the viability of a project/ programme/ grant scheme was the project subjected to adequate examination?	N/A	
4.11 If costs increased was approval received from the Sanctioning Authority?	3	Yes, this would be a requirement for funding approval/drawdown.
4.12 Were any projects/programmes/grant schemes terminated because of deviations from the plan, the budget or because circumstances in the environment changed the need for the investment?	N/A	No.

Checklist 5 – To be completed in respect of current expenditure programmes incurring expenditure in the year under review.

Incurring Current Expenditure	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 -3	Comment/Action Required
5.1 Are there clear objectives for all areas of current expenditure?	3	Yes. Spending programmes defined as part of the annual budget process.
5.2 Are outputs well defined?	3	National KPI's are in place for local government
5.3 Are outputs quantified on a regular basis?	3	KPI's are established each year for specific services. Service delivery plans are reviewed periodically. Regular management and progress meetings and implementation of PMDS are examples of monitoring efficiency tools used. Annual reports and returns also.
5.4 Is there a method for monitoring efficiency on an ongoing basis?	3	Yes, budget performance and monitoring is in place, as above. Annual reports and returns are made. Audits, including by external agencies, also occur.
5.5 Are outcomes well defined?	3	The further development of annual service plans will enhance this measurement. Also, corporate plans, roads plans, budget report, annual report, development plan, meetings with the Department/TII.
5.6 Are outcomes quantified on a regular basis?	2	The further development of annual service plans will enhance this measurement. Also, annual reports and returns, mid-year reviews and monthly management reports to the Council.
5.7 Are unit costings compiled for performance monitoring?	2	The Council complies with national performance indicators in relation to cost per unit and costing is also carried out by service.
5.8 Are other data compiled to monitor performance?	2	Data compiled in each service area, e.g. environmental monitoring reports under licences, monthly expenditure monitoring and annual budget and AFS processes facilitate monitoring. Returns to relevant central government departments, annual stats and RMCEI. Library data on usage of facilities.
5.9 Is there a method for monitoring effectiveness on an ongoing basis?	2	All expenditure is evaluated annually across these service levels as part of the budget process and annual reports and returns, monthly management reports, mid-year reviews, networks and external assessment of standards. All items referred to above in this checklist contribute to ongoing effective monitoring.
5.10 Has the organisation engaged in any other 'evaluation proofing' ¹ of programmes/projects?	2	The Council has co-operated in all the VFM studies and subsequent progress reviews issued by the Department's VFM unit. Under 'other evaluations' there have been ten internal audit reports in 2017, a LGA review and IW reviews. There is an internal process to follow up recommendations which will include VFM reviews. Customer surveys and external assessments are also done.

¹ Evaluation proofing involves checking to see if the required data are being collected so that when the time comes a programme/project can be subjected to a robust evaluation. If the data are not being collected, then a plan should be put in place to collect the appropriate indicators to allow for the completion of a robust evaluation down the line.

Checklist 6 – To be completed in respect of capital projects/programmes & capital grant schemes discontinued in the year under review.

Capital Expenditure Recently Completed	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 - 3	Comment/Action Required
6.1 How many post project reviews were completed in the year under review?	2	Two annual capital programmes completed and one once-off project
6.2 Was a post project review completed for all projects/programmes exceeding €20m?	N/A	N/A – no recent project at this level.
6.3 Was a post project review completed for all capital grant schemes where the scheme both (1) had an annual value in excess of €30m and (2) where scheme duration was five years or more?	N/A	N/A – no recent project at this level.
6.4 Aside from projects over €20m and grant schemes over €30m, was the requirement to review 5% (Value) of all other projects adhered to?	3	More than 5% value of other projects was reviewed for this report.
6.5 If sufficient time has not elapsed to allow for a proper assessment, has a post project review been scheduled for a future date?	2	
6.6 Were lessons learned from post-project reviews disseminated within the Sponsoring Agency and to the Sanctioning Authority? (Or other relevant bodies)	N/A	NA in light of comments above.
6.7 Were changes made to practices in light of lessons learned from post-project reviews?	N/A	NA in light of comments above.
6.8 Were project reviews carried out by staffing resources independent of project implementation?	N/A	NA in light of comments above.

Checklist 7 – To be completed in respect of current expenditure programmes that reached the end of their planned timeframe during the year or were discontinued.

Current Expenditure that (i) reached the end of its planned timeframe or (ii) was discontinued	Self-Assessed Compliance Rating: 1 - 3	Comment/Action Required
7.1 Were reviews carried out of current expenditure programmes that matured during the year or were discontinued?	N/A	No programme completed in 2017
7.2 Did those reviews reach conclusions on whether the programmes were efficient?	N/A	
7.3 Did those reviews reach conclusions on whether the programmes were effective?	N/A	
7.4 Have the conclusions reached been taken into account in related areas of expenditure?	N/A	
7.5 Were any programmes discontinued following a review of a current expenditure programme?	N/A	
7.6 Were reviews carried out by staffing resources independent of project implementation?	N/A	
7.7 Were changes made to the organisation's practices in light of lessons learned from reviews?	N/A	

Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

Section A: Introduction

This introductory section details the headline information on the programme or project in question.

Programme Information	
Name	Payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre (MRCC).
Detail	Current expenditure being incurred, as part of service E11 - payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre.
Responsible Body	Clare County Council
Current Status	Expenditure Being Incurred
Start Date	1. Payments to other Fire Authorities – 1980 2. MRCC – 1993
End Date	1. Payments to other Fire Authorities – On-going 2. MRCC - On-going
Overall Cost	€669,000 in 2017

Project Description

The payments are described and detailed separately as follows:

1. Payments to other Fire Authorities

Section 10(2)(a) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003, requires the Council, as the fire authority, to make provision for the prompt and efficient extinguishing of fires in buildings and other places of all kinds in its functional area and for the protection and rescue of persons and property from injury by fire. First turnout fire cover is provided on an agency basis by Limerick fire service to parts of South East (SE) Clare including Shannon Banks, Westbury, Parteen, Ardnacrusha, Meelick and surrounding townlands. These townlands are closer to Limerick City fire station than to any fire station in county Clare. The level of contribution paid by Clare

County Council is determined through a process known as ‘the average of averages’ formula where the relevant costs incurred by Limerick fire brigade are determined on a pro-rata basis, using the total average of the population, the number of fire calls and the rateable valuation of both fire authorities.

In addition to the above, Limerick fire service on occasion also attend incidents in other parts of county Clare not covered by the above agreement at a cost of €2,000 per incident either on a first turnout basis (if the closest Clare County fire and rescue service brigade is unavailable) or assisting a Clare County fire and rescue service brigade.

Fire cover is also provided on an agency basis by Galway fire service to parts of north east (NE) Clare around Tubber and Ballinruan. These townlands are closer to Gort fire station than to any fire station in county Clare. Galway fire service invoices for these incidents on a cost plus overhead basis as they arise.

2. MRCC

Section 10(2)(c) of the Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003, requires the fire authority to make adequate provision for the reception of and response to calls for the assistance of the fire brigade. In order to fulfill this function, Limerick City & County Council as lead authority entered into agreements with Clare County Council and other Munster local authorities under Section 85 of the Local Government Act, 2001 for the provision of a mobilisation facility for their fire services, namely the Munster Regional Communications Centre. The level of contribution paid by Clare County Council is determined through a process known as ‘the average of averages’ formula where the costs incurred by the Munster Regional Communications Centre are determined on a pro-rata basis, using the total average of the population, the number of fire calls and the rateable valuation of all fire authorities in Munster.

Both expenditure programmes are in the category of current expenditure, included in the Council’s revenue budget on an annual basis under sub division E11.

Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

As part of this in-depth check, a Programme Logic Model (PLM) for the payments has been prepared. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on it is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>Other Fire Authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 10 (2)(a) of the Fire Services Act 1981 – Provision for the prompt and efficient extinguishing of fires in buildings & other places of all kinds (specifically in SE and NE Clare) and for the protection and rescue of persons and property from injury by fire. 	<p>Other Fire Authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditure of €439,000 Annual budget estimate. 	<p>Other Fire Authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of fire brigade by Limerick Fire Service to respond to first turnout callouts in South East Clare and by Galway Fire Service in NE Clare. Provision of appliances, equipment and trained personnel by Limerick and Galway fire services. 	<p>Other Fire Authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilisation to emergency incidents in SE Clare by Limerick Fire Service and in NE Clare by Galway Fire Service. 	<p>Other Fire Authorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prompt and efficient dealing with incidents in South East Clare by Limerick Fire Service and in NE Clare by Galway Fire Service. Compliance with the legal requirements of the Fire Services Act

<p>MRCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Section 10(2) (c) of the Fire Services Act 1981 – make adequate provision for the reception and response to calls for the assistance of the fire brigade. 	<p>MRCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expenditure of €230,000 Section 85 Agreement between Clare County Council and Limerick Council 	<p>MRCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of trained emergency call taking personnel 24/7, 365 days per annum. Provision of facilities, hardware & software to receive calls. Recording of voice communication. Provision of a radio communications network Mobilisation of other agencies as required. 	<p>MRCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receipt of call details. Answering 999 fire calls for County Clare. Activation of relevant brigade. Setting off fire fighter alerters. Provision of call details to relevant stations. Liaison with other principal emergency services and agencies. 	<p>MRCC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mobilisation of fire service to relevant emergency situations. Logging of all relevant details including provision of mobilisation hardware and software. Provision of radio communication network. Provision of data for statistical purposes Compliance with the legal requirements of the Fire Services Act Attendance at incidents of other agencies requested by the Fire Service
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Description of Programme Logic Model

1. Other Fire Authorities

Objectives: The objective of the payments to other fire authorities is to ensure fire cover is provided to parts of south east Clare and north east Clare.

Inputs: The primary input to the programme is current expenditure of €439,000. Limerick County Council provides an estimate on an annual basis of the expected costs for the following year.

Activities: There are a number of key activities, including the provision of a fire brigade by Limerick Fire Service to callouts in south east Clare and by Galway fire service in NE Clare. Both fire authorities provide suitable fire appliances and appropriately trained personnel to deal with such callouts.

Outputs: The output of the programme is the prompt and efficient mobilisation of Limerick Fire Service to incidents in SE Clare and by Galway Fire Service to incidents in NE Clare.

Outcomes: The main outcome is the prompt and efficient dealing with incidents and compliance with the legal obligation placed on Clare County Council by the Fire Services Act.

2. MRCC

Objectives: The objective of the payments to the MRCC is ensuring adequate provision has been made for the reception of and response to calls for assistance of the fire brigade.

Inputs: The primary input to the programme is current expenditure €230,000. There is also a Section 85 Agreement governing this arrangement.

Activities: There are a number of key activities, including provision of trained emergency operators on a 24/7, 365 days per annum basis. These operators are located in a purpose built building in Limerick city. They have the appropriate hardware and software for taking emergency calls and also for mobilising other agencies as required. MRCC also provide a fire service radio communication network and alerting network.

Outputs: The output of the programme is the taking of emergency callouts and the efficient mobilisation of relevant fire service resources in a timely manner. MRCC also mobilise other agencies as required by fire services at incidents.

Outcomes: The main outcomes include the provision of a call taking service and the mobilisation of relevant resources. Other agencies are also mobilised to incidents. In addition, MRCC also provide relevant statistical data to Clare County Council.

Section B - Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme

The following section tracks the payments to other bodies in terms of milestones.

1. Other Fire Authorities

Daily	Provision of fire brigade, appliances, equipment and trained personnel by Limerick and Galway Fire Services.
	Mobilisation to incidents as they occur
	Invoicing by Galway Fire Service of incidents as they occur

- Quarterly** Invoice from Limerick City and County Council for the provision of fire cover to SE Clare
Payment to Limerick City and County Council for the provision of fire cover
- Annually** Estimate provided by Limerick City and County Council for the provision of fire cover for the following year
- 2. MRCC**
- Daily** Provision of call taking centre with trained operators for the receipt of emergency callouts
Mobilisation of fire brigades and setting off fire-fighter alerters as incidents occur
Daily summary of activities for the previous day for invoicing, payment of wages and statistical purposes
- Monthly** Monthly summary of activity reports
Monthly report on malicious callouts for the previous month
- Quarterly** Invoice from Limerick City Council for the provision of MRCC services
- Annually** Estimate provided by Limerick City and County Council for the provision of call taking service by MRCC for the following year

Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents

The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and evaluation for the payments to other fire authorities and the regional communications centre.

Project/Programme Key Documents	
Title	Details
Legislation	Fire Services Act 1981 and 2003
Agreements	Section 85 agreement between Limerick City & County Council and Clare County Council
	Annual estimate from Limerick City & County Council for the provision of first turnout fire cover in SE Clare
	Annual estimate from Limerick City & County Council for the provision of a call taking service by the Munster Regional Communications Centre

Key Document 1: Fire Services Act

The Fire Services Act sets out the legislative requirements in relation to the provision of a fire brigade and also in relation to the requirement to provide an emergency call answering service. These are dealt with in Section 10 (2) (a) and 10 (2) (c) respectively.

Key Document 2: Section 85 Agreement between Limerick City & County Council and Clare County Council

This agreement was executed by Clare County Council on 27th October 1992. It provides the basis for Limerick City and County Council providing a call answering service for emergency incidents in County Clare and the subsequent mobilisation of the relevant brigades.

Key Document 3: Annual Estimate from Limerick City & County Council for the provision of First Turnout Fire Cover

In quarter 4 each year, Limerick City & County Council provide an estimate to Clare County Council for the cost of the provision of first turnout fire cover for the following year. The level of contribution paid by Clare County Council is determined through a process known as the average of averages formula where the relevant costs incurred by Limerick fire brigade are determined on a pro-rata basis, using the total average of the population, the number of fire calls and the rateable valuation of both fire authorities.

Key Document 4: Annual Estimate from Limerick City & County Council for the provision of the Munster Regional Communications Centre

In quarter 4 each year, Limerick City & County Council provide an estimate to Clare County Council for the cost of the provision of the Munster Regional Communications Centre for the following year. The level of contribution paid by Clare County Council is determined through a process known as the average of averages formula where the relevant costs incurred by Limerick fire brigade are determined on a pro-rata basis using the total average of the population, the number of fire calls and the rateable evaluation of all fire authorities in Munster.

Section B - Step 4: Data Audit

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for the current expenditure payments to other fire authorities and the Munster regional Communications centre. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the expenditure.

Data Required	Use	Availability
Mobilisation instructions – as calls arise	Specific instructions for individual incidents	Hard copy – Available at each station and with pay records
Call details – provided on a daily basis and a monthly summary	Used for processing FF payroll / invoicing / statistical data and operational monitoring	Hard copy / available on Fire Services Drive

Invoices from Limerick Fire Service for the provision of first turnout fire cover and for provision of MRCC	Budgetary control	Hard copies / Agresso
Invoices from Galway Fire Service for attendance at incidents in County Clare – as calls arise	Budgetary control	Hard copies / Agresso
Monthly report on malicious call-outs	Monitoring of activity	Fire Services Drive
Statistical data	Used for populating management reports, service indicators and KPI's	Fire Services Drive

Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps

The above data is maintained by Clare County Fire and Rescue and is available.

Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions

The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for the payments to other fire authorities and the regional communications centre based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

Does the delivery of the project/programme comply with the standards set out in the PSC? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)

The controls in place for the management of the payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre provide adequate assurance that there is compliance with the PSC in relation to this current expenditure being incurred (Implementation & Periodic Review).

Is the necessary data and information available such that the project/programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?

The necessary data and information is available, such that the programmes can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date.

What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?

The processes in place for the governance and management of this current expenditure were found to be satisfactory.

Section: In-Depth Check Summary

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this in-depth check on the payments to other fire authorities and the Munster regional Communications centre.

Summary of In-Depth Check

The objective of the payments to other fire authorities current expenditure is to provide fire cover by

other fire authorities which have a fire station nearer to parts of Clare than any fire station in Clare, thereby providing prompt and efficient response to fire incidents in those parts of Clare, and thereby complying with legislation. The objective of the payments to the Munster Regional Communications Centre is to enable the mobilization of fire brigades where they are needed and the provision of a radio communications network, thus complying with legislation. The key activities undertaken and service outputs are reported on regularly. The necessary data and information is available to enable the programme to be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date if required. The controls in place for the management and governance of the expenditure on payments to other fire authorities and to the Munster Regional Communications Centre provide adequate assurance that there is compliance with the PSC to-date in relation to this current expenditure 'being incurred'.

Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

Section A: Introduction

This introductory section details the headline information on the programme or project in question.

Programme Information	
Name	Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme.
Detail	Incurring current expenditure in order to tackle poverty and social exclusion.
Responsible Body	Clare County Council.
Current Status	Current Expenditure - Being Incurred.
Start Date	The current SICAP contract started in 2015
End Date	December 2017
Overall Cost	€855,341 (in 2017)

Project Description

Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme (SICAP). This programme is in the category of current expenditure, and included in the Council's revenue budget on an annual basis under sub division D06.

Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

Programme Logic Model (PLM) for the SICAP Programme (current expenditure ‘being incurred’) has been prepared. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on it is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<p>There were three goals under the 2015-2017 SICAP programme:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1 – to support and resource disadvantaged communities and marginalised groups to engage with relevant local and national stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues. • Goal 2 – to support individuals and marginalised target groups experiencing educational disadvantage so they can participate fully, engage with and progress through life-long learning opportunities through the use of community development approaches. • Goal 3 – to engage with marginalised target groups / individuals and residents of disadvantaged communities who are unemployed but who do not fall within mainstream employment service provision or who are referred to SICAP, to move them closer to the labour market and improve work readiness, and support them in accessing employment and self-employment and creating social enterprise opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revenue funding of €855,341. • The Clare Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) has an oversight role in the implementation of this programme. • The Programme implementer is a contracted company, the Clare Local Development Company (CLDC). • Human resources from Clare County Council’s rural development department. • IRIS information system. • Development co-ordinator assigned by POBAL. 	<p>The following actions were delivered as part of the 2015-2017 Action Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forming community groups 2. Collective action (to promote equality and social inclusion). 3. Influencing decision making (to support disadvantaged communities enhance their participation at a local, regional and national level). 4. Solutions to Social Exclusion (develop and facilitate strategic collaborative frameworks) 5. Incredible years pre-school 6. Afterschool projects 7. Developmental Youthwork 8. Youth Mental Health 9. Back to Learning 10. To Employment (to move closer to the labour market and progress through employment) 11. To Self-Employment 12. Young People to Self-Employment 	<p>Key performance indicators as per SICAP end of year report 2017:</p> <p>KPI1: total number of disadvantaged individuals (15yrs upwards) engaged under SICAP on a one-to-one basis. Target = 950. Achieved at year end = 945. (99.5% achievement rate)</p> <p>KPI1b: % of disadvantaged individuals (15yrs upwards) engaged under SICAP on a one-to-one basis living in a disadvantaged area. Target = 14% of KPI1 target (133 individuals). Achieved at year end = 151 individuals. (>100% achievement)</p> <p>KPI2: Total number of local community groups assisted under SICAP. Target = 37. Achieved = 37. (100% achievement rate)</p>	<p>Delivery of the Social Inclusion and Community Activation Programme in Clare.</p> <p>Delivery of Actions within the Local Economic and Community Plan (2016-2021).</p>

Description of Programme Logic Model

Objectives: The objectives of 'SICAP' are to deliver a programme of activities that tackle social exclusion in the county, as part of the Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP).

Inputs: The primary input to the programme is current funding of €855,341. Other resources include the contracted company, Clare Local Development Company (CLDC), which will deliver the programme for Clare, with support from Clare County Council.

Activities: Progress report data is provided by CLDC (Programme Implementer), which form the basis of an annual plan, mid-year report and end of year report to the LCDC. Analytical statistics can be generated from this data by Clare County Council in order for proper reporting and management and to enable continuation of the contracted sums which are paid quarterly to the company. The input of data onto the IRIS system is ongoing, and is used for meetings of the LCDC, during which an update on SICAP is provided. The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), whose chief officer is an officer of Clare County Council reviews and approves the mid-year and end of year report. Approval of progress throughout the programme is recorded on the IRIS system and submitted to POBAL. Advice and support is received from POBAL through an assigned programme co-ordinator.

Outputs: There are prescribed key performance indicators outlined in the above table, which are reported on through the respective reporting structures.

Outcomes: Meeting KPI's and headline indicators for 2017. Compliance with the following: Goal cost % and maximum administration cost %; evidence (target groups/disadvantaged areas); horizontal themes (community development, equality, collaboration) etc.

Section B – Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme

The following section tracks the SICAP program from inception to conclusion in terms of major project/programme milestones.

Outset	Procurement process commenced in 2014. Programme implementer was appointed in early 2015. The SICAP programme was implemented between April 2015 to December 2017.
Bi-Monthly	The LCDC meets six times a year.
Quarterly	Reporting by the CLDC to Clare County Council on the SICAP programme is quarterly.
Bi-Annually	Reporting by the CLDC to LCDC/Clare County Council is at mid-year and end of year. Reporting by the LCDC/Clare County Council to Pobal is at mid-year and

end of year.

Council staff meet with CLDC to monitor performance.

Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents

The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and evaluation for SICAP.

Project/Programme Key Documents	
Title	Details
Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021	SICAP is detailed as part of the strategic actions within the LECP 2016-2021.
Tender Documents for procurement of a contractor for SICAP delivery	Tender, tender report, funding agreement and contracts.
Chief executive orders	Chief executive order authorising awarding of contract. Chief executive order for the signing of the contract
Contract	Five year contract between LCDC/Clare County Council and CLDC. Funding agreement also in place between the LCDC/ Clare County Council and CLDC.
Minutes of LCDC meetings	Minutes of meetings
Quarterly and Bi- Annual reports	Reports of CLDC to LCDC Reports of LCDC to Pobal LCDC Annual Report to Clare County Council (includes a report on SICAP activity).
Legislation	Local Government Reform Act 2014

Key Document 1: Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021:

Local government continues to play a key role in local and community development. The Local Government Reform Act 2014 further strengthens this function by setting out the role of the Local Community Development Committee (LCDC) and the requirement to prepare a six year Local Economic and Community Plan.

The local authority's role in terms of community initiatives and service provision at local level is evident in the wide range of services that it delivers such as: libraries; leisure facilities and amenities; arts programmes; estate management; urban and village enhancement schemes; playgrounds; burial grounds; the provision of supports to Tidy Town groups, etc. These activities provide the local government context in which the underpinning principles of 'local development', 'community development' and 'sustainable

development' are realised. These principles are deeply embedded in the process by means of which the LECP was developed and in the values that underlie its vision and objectives and are central to the manner in which its delivery will be monitored, reviewed and evaluated. When considering the vision for the LECP and the themes which it would address, the LCDC and the respective strategic policy group (SPC) paid particular heed to the EU's growth strategy for the coming decade, known as Europe 2020. This growth strategy aims to create a Europe that is smart, sustainable and inclusive, delivering high levels of employment, productivity and social inclusion. On this basis, many of the high level actions within the LECP are applicable to and the responsibility of the social inclusion and community activation programme.

Key Document 2: Tender documents for procurement of service provider

The tender for the delivery of the SICAP programme (2015-2017) was advertised in late 2014. An evaluation sub-committee was set up, which comprised members of the LCDC and staff from the procurement unit of the Council. Upon evaluation of the tenders received, a report was submitted to the LCDC. The LCDC approved and formally accepted the tender. The tender was awarded to CLDC. A funding agreement and contracts were then executed.

Key Document 3: Chief executive orders

Chief executive orders were prepared and signed, appointing the programme implementer (CLDC) and authorising the signing of the contract.

Key Document 4: Contract

The SICAP tender documentation formed the basis of the contract signed between Clare County Council and Clare Local Development Committee on the 19th March 2015 (for the 2015-2017 programmes).

Key Document 5 – Minutes of LCDC Meetings

Meetings with minutes recorded, were held during February, May, July, September, November and December 2017. Of those six meetings, the SICAP programme was on the agenda for five meetings.

Key Document 6 - The Quarterly and Bi-Annual Report from CLDC to LCDC/CCC

The detailed process for the review of the annual plan are set out by POBAL and overseen by the LCDC. The reports for the various stages are submitted to the members of the LCDC for their consideration in accordance with the programme requirements. Approval of progress throughout the programme is recorded on the IRIS system and submitted to POBAL. The input of data onto the IRIS system is ongoing, and is used for bi-monthly meetings of the LCDC, whereat an update on SICAP is a recurring agenda item.

Key Document 7 – Funding Agreement

A funding agreement is signed and in place between the LCDC, Clare County Council and CLDC for the implementation of the SICAP programme (2015-2017).

Section B - Step 4: Data Audit

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for SICAP. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the programme.

Data Required	Use	Availability
To support and resource disadvantaged communities and marginalised target groups to engage with relevant local and national stakeholders in identifying and addressing social exclusion and equality issues.	The IRIS information system tracks activities and data inputs and enables monitoring, management, and contract payments to continue.	Available from Clare County Council rural development directorate.
To support individuals and marginalised target groups experiencing educational disadvantage so they can participate fully, engage with and progress through life-long learning opportunities through the use of community development approaches.	The IRIS information system tracks activities and data inputs and enables monitoring, management, and contract payments to continue.	Available from Clare County Council rural development directorate.
To engage with marginalised target groups/individuals and residents of disadvantaged communities who are unemployed but who do not fall within mainstream employment service provision, or who are referred to SICAP, to move them closer to the labour market and improve work readiness, and support them in accessing employment and self-employment and creating social enterprise opportunities.	The IRIS information system tracks activities and data inputs and enables monitoring, management, and contract payments to continue.	Available from Clare County Council rural development directorate.

Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps

As above, ongoing progress report data is provided by CLDC (programme implementer), which forms the basis of an annual plan, mid-year report and end of year report to the LCDC. Analytical statistics can be generated from this data by Clare County Council in order for proper reporting and management and to enable continuation of the contracted sums which are paid quarterly to the company.

The input of data onto the IRIS system is ongoing, and is used for bi-monthly meetings of the

LCDC, whereat an update on SICAP is a recurring agenda Item. The Local Community Development Committee (LCDC), whose chief officer is an officer of Clare County Council reviews and approves the mid-year and end of year report. Approval of progress throughout the programme is recorded on the IRIS system and submitted to POBAL.

Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions

The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for the SICAP programme and aftercare based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

Does the delivery of the programme comply with the standards set out in the PSC? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)

The controls in place for the management of SICAP provide adequate assurance that there is compliance with the PSC to-date in relation to this category of expenditure i.e. current expenditure 'being incurred' (Implementation & Periodic Review).

Is the necessary data and information available such that the programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?

The necessary data and information is available to enable the programme to be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date if required.

What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?

The processes in place for the governance and management of 'SICAP' current expenditure were found to be satisfactory.

Section: In-Depth Check Summary

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this in-depth check on SICAP.

Summary of In-Depth Check

The objective of the 'SICAP' current expenditure is to tackle poverty and social exclusion and long term unemployment through local engagement and partnerships between disadvantaged people, community organisations and public sector bodies. It aims to tackle deprivation, unemployment and disengagement through locally led approaches. The key activities undertaken are reported on regularly and an annual programme is submitted for approval. The necessary data and information is available to enable the programme to be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date if required. The controls in place for the management and governance of the SICAP programme provide adequate assurance that there is compliance with the PSC to-date in relation to this category of expenditure i.e. current expenditure 'being incurred' (Implementation & Periodic Review).

Quality Assurance 2016 – In Depth Check

Section A: Introduction

This introductory section details the headline information on the Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing, R494 Improvement Project

Project Information	
Name	Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement
Detail	<p>The proposed project will provide a western bypass of Killaloe, a new bridge crossing of the River Shannon and an upgrade of the existing R494 regional road from Ballina to the R445 at Birdhill. The entire scheme is approximately 6.20km long.</p> <p>The new bridge will cross the River Shannon approximately 1km south of the existing Killaloe Bridge and will connect the proposed Killaloe bypass with the R494.</p>
Responsible Body	Clare County Council are the project lead but Tipperary County Council are also involved. Clare County Council have entered into a S85 agreement with Tipperary County Council.
Current Status	Expenditure being incurred on land acquisition & payment to consultants. Arbitration hearings taking place re CPO's. Consultants now being appointed to proceed to detailed design and tender and it is expected that construction will commence in the final Q of 2019.
Start Date	2003
End Date	2022 (estimate)
Overall Cost	€40 million (estimate)

Project Description

The proposed Killaloe bypass, Shannon bridge crossing and R494 improvement scheme will provide a western bypass of Killaloe, a new bridge crossing of the river Shannon and an upgrade of the existing R494 regional road from Ballina to the N7 at Birdhill. The entire scheme is approximately 6.2km and will cross the river Shannon approximately 1km to the south of the existing Killaloe Bridge and will cross the Kilmastulla River (a tributary of the Shannon and part of the lower Shannon Special Area of Conservation (SAC) on the R494.

The proposed scheme has been broken down into three sections as follows:

- Killaloe Bypass: This part of the scheme aims to create a western bypass around the town of Killaloe which will connect the R463 to the north of town with the proposed Shannon Bridge Crossing section and R463 to the south of the town.
- Shannon Bridge Crossing: This section of the scheme will cross the River Shannon approximately 1km south of the existing Killaloe bridge and will connect the proposed Killaloe Bypass with the R494.
- R494 Upgrade: This section will involve widening, regrading and local realignment of the R494 from its junction with the R496 and proposed Shannon bridge crossing south of Ballina, as far as the junction with the R445 (previously known as N7) north of Birdhill.

It was agreed by the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport in early 2018 to grant approval for all three phases to proceed as parts of one overall project.

Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

As part of this In-Depth Check, a Programme Logic Model (PLM) for the Shannon Bridge Crossing project has been prepared. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on it is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

A PLM is a

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create a western bypass around Killaloe which will connect to the R463 to the north of town with the bridge crossing south of the town. 2. Provide a second bridge that spans the river at Killaloe, approximately 1km south of the existing Killaloe bridge reducing congestion and delays on the existing bridge. 3. Upgrade the R494 widening, regarding and realigning from its junction with the R496 to north of Birdhill. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capital funding, ~€40m; 2. Consultants, service providers, contractors; 3. Human resources of Clare County Council and Tipperary County Council; 4. Public consultation; 5. Steering committees; 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning and scoping; 2. Environmental assessments 3. Legal work on planning challenges 4. Constraints analysis and reporting 5. Route selection 6. Compulsorily purchasing land 7. Public consultations 8. Arbitration Hearings 9. Steering Committee meetings 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Planning applications 2. Environmental assessment reports 3. Engineering and topography reports 4. Constraints and route selection reports; 5. CPO notifications 6. Legal decisions 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New transport access within the region, delivering economic and community benefits. 2. Easing the traffic congestion and delay in and around Ballina/Killaloe 3. Easing safety concerns in the town and wider area

Description of Programme Logic Model

Objectives: This is an infrastructural construction project which will create new transport access in and around Killaloe and Ballina, including a new bridge crossing over the Shannon.

Inputs: The project will involve expenditure of an estimated €40m, the engagement of the public in public consultation processes, the engagement of multiple consultants and contractors, human resources within the lead authority Clare County Council.

Activities: The preliminary stages concerned planning and preliminary studies, public consultation, environmental impact and other studies related to site topography of the area. The preliminary stages involved using the studies to set out possible route options and to report on these options. There was detailed appraisal to select between route options. This project has met legal challenge, therefore legal case work has also been an activity involved. Once the preferred route option was decided and the legal challenge concluded, there was activity relating to the compulsory purchase of the land required for the project, including arbitration hearings.

Outputs: The outputs to date are documentary in nature and various reports have been produced to this point. Recent output is the acquisition of the required land parcels.

Outcomes: The outcome will eventually be a new road bridge over the Shannon between Clare and Tipperary, bringing relief locally to untenable traffic congestion, alleviating concerns about the safety of motorists and pedestrians, and opening up the wider region for enhanced economic development.

Section B - Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project

The following section tracks the Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement project from inception to conclusion in terms of major project milestones.

2003	Officials from Clare, North Tipperary and Limerick Councils and officials from the DoEHLG agree the strategic requirement for works to take place on the Shannon Bridge Crossing at Killaloe to improve road safety , particularly of pedestrians.
2003 - 2004	Preparation of a brief for the appointment of consulting engineers to prepare a preliminary report for the proposed Killaloe/Ballina Shannon Crossing agreed by the DoEHLG in April 2003. Brief prepared by Clare Co Council in March 2004 & forwarded to the DoEHLG for approval to appoint consulting engineers. Approval issued on in April 2004. Advertised on E tenders and OJEU for consulting engineers.
2005	RPS Group Ltd consulting engineers appointed on 3 rd Feb 2005 to prepare a feasibility study/preliminary report. Feasibility study & preliminary report prepared by RPS in March 2005 followed by a constraints study in April 2005. Public consultation sessions on 19 th April , 6 th Sept & 15 th Nov 2005
2006	Circular from DoEHLG confirming 100% grant aid for Shannon Crossing project. Route selection report prepared in Feb 2006 and recommended upgrading R494

	and construction of a bypass around Killaloe <u>as well as</u> the new Shannon Bridge Crossing. Route selection agreed
2007	Tender for engineering consultancy service for Killaloe ByPass , Shannon Bridge Crossing & R494 for constraints, route selection, preliminary design, EIS & CPO. Roughan & O'Donovan consulting engineers were successful
2008	Approval recd from the Dept of Transport to appoint Roughan & O'Donovan as consultants for the project. Contract between Clare Co Council & Roughan 'Donovan - 25/2/2008. Constraints study completed by Roughan & O'Donovan in July 2008 & noted by Clare County Council at September 2008 meeting
2009	S85 agreement with Tipperary County Council approved by Clare Co Council at March 2009 meeting of Clare Co Council
2009	Route selection & preliminary design prepared by Roughan O'Donovan.
2011	NRA approved the preliminary design
2012	Chief executive's order for CPO signed on 6 th Feb 2012. Oral hearing took place re CPOs
2013	Confirmation of Killaloe Bypass Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement Scheme) Compulsory Purchase (Roads No. 1) Order, 2012 by An Bord Pleanála
2013	Judicial review taken against planning decision by An Bord Pleanála.
2014	High Court challenge hearing on the decision of An Bord Pleanala to approve the scheme
2016	High Court rejected appeal and this decision was appealed to the Supreme Court which upheld the High Court decision. This concluded the judicial review process.
2016	Notices to Treat issued to all affected landowners & negotiations commenced with affected landowners
2017	Negotiations continued with affected landowners through CPO process
2018	Arbitration hearings commenced re CPOs
2018	Procurement to undertake the detailed design, preparation of tender documentation, tender evaluation, tender award, contract administration, cost control including agreement of final accounts for the proposed project
2019	Estimated that project will enter the implementation phase
2022	Estimated that project construction will be completed.

Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents

The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and evaluation for the project.

Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvements Key Documents	
Title	Details
Approval issued from DoEHLG on 1st April 2004 to procure a consulting engineer.	Facilitated the engagement of consultant to prepare a preliminary/feasibility report for the proposed project
Chief executive order appointing RPS consultants, 2005	Facilitated the engagement of consultant to prepare a preliminary/feasibility report for the proposed project
Circular from DoEHLG confirming 100% grant aid for Shannon Crossing project, 2006	Confirmed 100% funding to proceed to engage consultants etc
Route selection report prepared in Feb 2006	RPS Group consultants recommended that as well as a new bridge crossing, a bypass of Killaloe was required, as well as an improvement of the R494
Chief executive order appointing Roughan & O'Donovan consultants, 2007	Facilitated the engagement of consultant to prepare for constraints, route selection, preliminary design, EIS & CPO for proposed project
Constraints study report 2008 (key doc 1)	Study completed by Roughan O'Donovan
Route selection report, 2009 (key doc 2)	Study completed by Roughan O'Donovan
S85 Agreement between Clare County Council and Tipperary County Council	S85 agreement agreed at the March 2009 meeting of Clare Co Council to allow Clare Co Council to lead the project, supported by Tipperary Co Council
Multi Criteria Analysis of Route, 2010 (key doc 3) Cost Benefit Analysis, November 2011 (key doc4)	MCA of route & CBA assessment of cost and benefit over 30 year appraisal period.
NRA approved preliminary design	Facilitated further advancement of project
Chief Executive Order for CPO signed on 6 th Feb 2012	Facilitated issuing of correspondence re CPOs to affected landowners
Environmental Impact Statement Vol 1 Non-technical summary and Vol 2 Main text, Feb 2012 (key doc 5)	Roughan O'Donovan EIS report report
Confirmation of Killaloe Bypass Shannon Bridge Crossing and R494 Improvement Scheme Compulsory Purchase (Roads No. 1) Order, 2012 by An Bord Pleanála	Approval of CPO
An Bord Pleanala decision on the project – approval (03.HA0038) by the board, March 2013	Approval granted with conditions for project to proceed
Court decisions on legal challenges to the project proceeding.	Detailed judicial decisions are on file, rejecting the legal challenges.

Five documents were selected for more detailed analysis.

Key document 1 – Constraints study

The constraints study had as its objective the gathering of as much background information as possible to determine the constraints, including physical, environmental and engineering which could impact the location, design and progress of the scheme. The study also summarised the results of a public consultation, so that constraints perceived by the community were also gathered. The data gathered and included in the constraints study was used to inform route options, avoiding the various constraints identified to the greatest possible extent.

Key document 2 – Route selection report

This report used a lot of gathered data to come up with various route options on engineering, environmental and economic grounds. The purpose was to set out the comprehensive investigation and analysis of the most feasible route options. The factors considered in the assessment of route options were: engineering suitability, traffic safety and impact, archaeology and cultural heritage, ecology, landscape and visual impact, agricultural land use, geology, hydrology, hydroecology and economics. Comparison matrices then enabled the better options to be subjected to further appraisal to enable a preferred route corridor to be recommended.

Key document 3 – Multi-criteria analysis (MCA)

An MCA was carried out on the bypass options and the bridge crossing options. The analysis was carried out by assessing the options against high level criteria such as economy, safety, environment, accessibility and social inclusion and integration with other policies. Each criterion had a subset of items, for example environment had the components air quality, noise and vibration, landscape and visual quality, biodiversity etc.. Each route option was assessed against these criteria and the results tabulated. To allow for some criteria being more significant than others, a weighted scoring system was applied, whereby the criteria and sub-criteria were assigned a level of importance and an impact (positive or negative). This scoring system was again applied to each route option allowing an overall score for each route option. As a further step, sensitivity analysis was done on the scoring system, whereby assigned levels of importance were adjusted. The sensitivity analysis confirmed the preferred route option as being the same preferred route option obtained using the original (i.e. non-adjusted) scoring system.

Key document 4 – Cost benefit analysis (CBA)

This report is based on assessing over a thirty year period, the costs and benefits of the proposed project. It used established transport project guidelines (NRA '*Project Appraisal Guidelines National Parameter Values*' and Department of Transport '*Guidelines on a Common Appraisal Framework for Transport Projects*'). The traffic and economic related parameters included in the analysis were: values of time, journey purpose, vehicle occupancy and vehicle operating costs. Journey time and vehicle operating cost benefits and

project delivery and maintenance costs were included, and a 'do nothing' scenario was compared with a 'complete the project' scenario. The results of the CBA were that the proposed project was supported by a strong economic case.

Key document 5 – Environmental Impact Statement EIS

This report considered the significant environmental impacts of the scheme and identified. The impacts covered in the EIS were: on citizens, on the natural environment (flora, fauna, habitat, noise and vibration, air quality, climate, soils and geology), on landscape/visual impact, on farm and home assets, on archaeology, architectural and cultural heritage. Mitigation measures were identified in the report which would be done pre-construction and during construction, for example to landscape plant the proposed new route to compensate for hedgerow loss from the project or to install traffic management measures to minimize traffic disruption during construction.

The data available is voluminous and spans more than a decade. The documentation examined (the five key documents described above, as well as others) was found to meet appraisal, analysis and evaluation protocols consistent with the PSC and/or its predecessor. The project, about to enter detailed design and tender stage, began as a river bridge crossing, but through the appraisal and evaluation process was approved to become a larger town bypass plus river bridge crossing, with an associated road upgrade.

Section B - Step 4: Data Audit

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for the project. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the project.

Data Required	Use	Availability
Engineering and topography; Traffic flow data; Geology and hydrology; Socio-economic data; Land use data; Land and aquatic ecology; Architectural & cultural heritage; Landscape and visual data.	Informs project definition and design	Available in detailed reports on file
Environmental impact assessment	Comply with statute and inform inform planning and decision consideration	Available in detailed reports on file
Public consultation data	Informs route selection and design	Available on file and in detailed reports on file
Costs	Informs route selection and design	Available on file and in detailed reports on file.
Steering committee meetings and progress reports	Reports and monitors progress	Available on file
Cost benefit analysis/multi-criteria analysis	Informs decision making about proceeding with the project	Available on file and in detailed reports on file.
Land ownership and land acquisition data - CPO details	Informs compulsory purchase order requirement	Available on file and in detailed reports on file

Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps

The key data required to evaluate the project is in place and available. Very significant documentary data has been generated since the outset more than a decade ago. During the subject year, 2017, the significant expenditure and process activity related to the land acquisition and this review provides assurance that all relevant data linked to a large and complex compulsory purchase of land was available and easily traceable to a documented appraisal of land value and an expenditure decision by the relevant senior officer. As the project moves into a further phase, it is recommended that the data generated to date should be appropriately parceled and indexed, so as to better enable ease of consultation of the data, should an evaluation occur again in the future.

Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions

The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for the project based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

Does the delivery of the project comply with the standards set out in the PSC? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)

Preliminary and detailed appraisals occurred and were submitted to the sanctioning authority for approval in principle to proceed to planning stage. The records demonstrate that there was project oversight to date by the Council as lead authority, and cooperation and communication with the sanctioning authority during milestone phases and activities.

The steps 1 to 7 of part B01 of the PSC (PSC) in relation to the category 'expenditure under consideration' and the 'Standard Appraisal Process' have been addressed in the constraints study and route selection report which deals with the requirements to define the objectives of the project, explore options taking account of constraints, quantify the costs of viable options, analyse the main options, identify the risks associated with each viable option, decide on a preferred option and make a recommendation to the sanctioning authority.

Cost benefit analysis and multi criteria analysis was completed for the project, in line with requirements of a project of this value under the Public Spending Code, and these analyses were submitted to the sanctioning authority.

Is the necessary data and information available such that the project can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?

Yes, all relevant items were available for this review.

What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?

This is an ongoing major project which is at the stage of moving to detailed design and tender preparation. The processes and management were found to be satisfactory.

Section: In-Depth Check Summary

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this in-depth check on the Killaloe Bypass, Shannon Bridge Crossing, R494 Improvement Project

Summary of In-Depth Check

The objective of the project is to construct a new road bypassing Killaloe, a new bridge over the Shannon between Clare and Tipperary, and improvements to the regional road. This report deals with the appraisal stage of the PSC in relation to the project, under the category of 'capital expenditure being incurred' at a project value of €40m.

Following technical reports, a constraints study, public consultation processes, a number of route options were appraised and one route selected as the preferred route. There was in-depth appraisal, and multi-criteria and cost benefit analysis, and approval in principle to advance the scheme through the processes given by the sanctioning authority. The preferred route was subjected to an environment impact statement.

CPO and land acquisition activity was the principal work during the subject year under review, 2017. It is anticipated that consultants will be appointed and working on detailed design and tender preparation in 2018. The review completed for this report enables the provision of adequate assurance that there is broad compliance with the PSC in relation to this capital project.

APPENDIX THREE

Details of Projects and Programmes that exceeded €500,000 during 2017

Local Authority	Expenditure being considered					Expenditure being incurred			Expenditure recently ended		
	Current	Capital				> €0.5m			> €0.5m		
	> €0.5m	Capital Grant Schemes > €0.5m	Capital Projects			Current Expenditure	Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects	Current Expenditure	Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects
			€0.5 - €5m	€5 - €20m	€20m plus						
Local Authority Name											
Clare County Council											
Housing & Building											
Clonlara 10 houses								2,144,203			
Feakle, 13 houses								3,362,294			
Quilty, 18 houses								3,673,971			
Tullyglass, Shannon, 21 houses								4,740,000			
Housing Planned Maintenance Prog								10,000,000			
Local Infrastructure Housing Activation Fund LIHAF Claureen								4,000,000			
28 Units at Lios Anama, VH								1,050,000			
Roslevan, Ennis, 8 houses			1,587,697								
Ashline, Ennis, 40 houses				7,854,000							
Ballaghboy, Ennis, 4 houses			1,200,000								
Bruachlan, Westbury, VH, 22 houses			1,000,000								
Acha Bhile, Ennis, VH 30 houses			873,000								
A01 Maintenance and Improvement of LA Housing Units							3,109,331				
A02 Housing Assessment, Allocation and Transfer							642,010				
A03 Housing Rent and Tenant Purchase Administration							755,661				
A04 Housing Community Development Support							737,530				
A06 Support to Housing Capital Programme							1,695,696				
A07 RAS and Leasing Programme	634,061						5,587,311				
A08 Housing Loans							620,495				
A09 Housing Grants							2,878,948				
DPG extensions to LA Housing										829,020	
Vacant stock returns 2017										1,675,888	
Road Transportation and Safety											
Ennis Off Street Parking			2,000,000								
Shannon airport access road N19			10,000,000								
West Clare Greenway			10,000,000								
Kilnamona realignment, N85			5,000,000								
Ennistymon Inner Relief Road			6,000,000								
Flood relief scheme at Kilkee			3,400,000								
Flood relief scheme at Springfield Clonlara			1,400,000								
Flood Relief scheme at Miltown Malbay			600,000								
Ennis Flood Relief Scheme								8,600,000			
Shannon Bridge Crossing 2006 onwards								40,000,000			
Limerick Northern Distributor Road								140,000,000			
B02 NS Road - Maintenance and Improvement							2,498,195				
B03 - Regional Road - Maintenance and Improvement	1,781,545						6,109,192				

Local Authority	Expenditure being considered					Expenditure being incurred			Expenditure recently ended		
	Current > €0.5m	Capital				> €0.5m			> €0.5m		
		Capital Grant Schemes > €0.5m	Capital Projects			Current Expenditure	Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects	Current Expenditure	Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects
Local Authority Name Clare County Council		€0.5 - €5m	€5 - €20m	€20m plus							
B04 - Local Road - Maintenance and Improvement					18,198,706						
B05 - Public Lighting					1,888,552						
B07 - Road Safety Engineering Improvement					667,724						
B09 - Maintenance and Management of Car Parking					787,952						
2014 Storm Damage Remedial works, various codes							17,600,000				
Water Services											
C01 - Water Supply					5,613,846						
C02 - Operation and Maintenance of Waste Water Treatment					3,265,611						
C03- Collection of Water and Waste Water Charges					1,166,255						
C05 - Admin of Group and Private Installations					1,132,642						
C06 - Support to Water Capital Programme					694,078						
C 08 - Local Authority Water and Sanitary Services					577,378						
Development Management											
Cliffs of Moher Coach Park Reception Building							700,000				
Cliffs of Moher Car Park Development							1,500,000				
Shannon Town Park							910,000				
Holy Island Visitor Management and Tourism Development Plan							4,000,000				
Doolin Centre Development							5,000,000				
Burren Tourism Conservation Life Project (Geopark Life)							2,200,000				
D01 - Forward Planning					1,228,991						
D02 - Development Management					1,355,005						
D03 - Enforcement					1,055,714						
D05 - Tourism Development and Promotion					8,851,870						
D06 - Community and Enterprise Function	1,060,672				2,845,983						
D09 - Economic Development and Promotion					1,761,270						
Social Innovation Centre Project Ennistymon		600,000									
Environmental Services											
Kilkee firestation upgrade							661,207				
E01 - Landfill Operation and Aftercare					1,395,946						
E02 - Recovery & Recycling Facilities Operations					2,048,776						
E05 - Litter Management					898,782						
E06 - Street Cleaning					1,888,107						
E07 - Waste Regulations, Monitoring and Enforcement					658,617						
E10 - Safety of Structures and Places					1,198,210						
E11- Operation of Fire Service					4,888,587						
E12- Fire Prevention					574,671						
E13 - Water Quality, Air and Noise Pollution					780,796						
County Burial Ground Kildysart Road							714,000				

Local Authority	Expenditure being considered					Expenditure being incurred			Expenditure recently ended		
	Current	Capital				> €0.5m			> €0.5m		
	> €0.5m	Capital Grant Schemes > €0.5m	Capital Projects			Current Expenditure	Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects	Current Expenditure	Capital Grant Schemes	Capital Projects
Local Authority Name			€0.5 - €5m	€5 - €20m	€20m plus						
Clare County Council											
Illounanagh, Shannon, development?											
Recreation and Amenity											
Lees Road Astro Turf Facility											500,000
Active Kilrush Sports Complex Facilities development			600,000								
Ennis library project								11,000,000			
F01 - Leisure Facilities Operations						1,937,453					
F02 - Operation of Library and Archival Service						4,302,845					
F03 - Outdoor leisure Areas Operation						2,150,145					
F05 - Operation of Arts Programme						1,372,519					
Land at Gaurus for recreation			2,200,000								
Agriculture, Education, Health and Welfare											
G04 - Veterinary Service						703,034					
Miscellaneous Services											
Quin Road Campus 2016								1,850,000			
Acquisition of Bindon Court office complex			650,000								
H01 - Profit/Loss Machinery Account						568,935					
H03 - Administration of Rates						5,670,863					
H09 - Local Representation and Civil Leadership						2,328,492					
H10 - Motor Taxation						1,064,822					
	3,476,278	0	47,110,697	7,854,000	0	110,157,546	0	263,705,675	0	0	3,004,908