

CLIMATE ACTION IN TOURISM *Across The Capital*

Michael McCarthy, NOAC Chair and Darragh O'Brien, Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, pictured following the opening of the Good Practice in Local Government Seminar in Kilkenny Castle on 26 October.



Use of solar power, innovative recruitment initiatives, developing tourism and education, ensuring effective cross-sector collaboration, assisting with accommodation needs and displaying good practice in the roll out of a digital strategy all featured as part of a showcase of local authority innovation at this year's Good Practice in Local Government Seminar.

Projects from Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kerry, Longford and Wicklow local authorities, in addition to the Local Government Management Agency (LGMA) were showcased at the sixth Good Practice in Local Government Seminar at the iconic Kilkenny Castle recently.

Several highly impressive projects to improve local authority services were presented at the seminar on 26 October, hosted by the National Oversight and Audit Commission (NOAC). The sixth annual seminar, organised by NOAC in collaboration with the LGMA and the County and City Management Association, presented a range of local authority innovations across numerous areas such as renewable technology, building on crisis management, recruitment, education, tourism, strategy development and accommodation assistance for vulnerable persons.

Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage, Darragh O'Brien TD, said that the variety and calibre of projects showcased brings the work of local authorities to life. "The projects show the importance of local action and co-ordination on topics as diverse as housing, education and climate change and the leadership of local authorities as the driving force behind so much good work."

The event, held in-person and virtually in Kilkenny Castle, took place as part of the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform's Public Service Transformation Week 2023. It was attended by chief executives and senior officials from the local authorities within Ireland.

LOCAL AUTHORITY PROJECTS

The seminar gave a platform to showcase the following innovative projects that could be replicated across Ireland:



Gillian Power, Senior Engineer, Housing Section, Wicklow County Council.



Dominic Byrne, LGMA's Digital & ICT Strategy Project Manager.

Solar Car Port – Wicklow County Council

The council has installed a large solar panel car port on its premises in Wicklow town, powering 40% of the County Building's baseload demand. The project is an example of using existing sites, such as car parks, to generate renewable energy and assist in achieving climate change targets. This project is the largest of its kind in Ireland.

Innovative Recruitment – Dublin City Council

Drive Dublin City Council has spent 18 months running two distinct recruitment drives focused on increasing opportunities for citizens living in socioeconomically challenged areas. They did this by working

with a variety of stakeholders and creating a specific traineeship programme to attract workers.

Kerry Community Response Forum – Kerry County Council

Local authorities have provided significant support in responding to the accommodation and other needs of those arriving from Ukraine, where in Kerry, under the stewardship of Kerry County Council, the Community Response Forum was repurposed as part of a high-level governance framework, to ensure effective cross-sector collaboration. This has resulted in the establishment of proactive governance structures, responding consistently to real-life situations, and promoting integration through the development of response initiatives to over 8,000 beneficiaries of temporary protection (BOTP) across the County.

Housing Disability Steering Group (HDSG) – Galway County Council

Galway County Council's Housing Disability Steering Group mental health subgroup uses a partnership approach between the local authority and HSE to progress mutual clients with mental health diagnoses. It offers a communication pathway and, for clients with additional needs, to progress having their own tenancies, supporting vulnerable applicants in a way that is person-centred, allows for case discussion and progression of complex cases and vulnerable clients.

Computer Science in Every Secondary School in Longford – Longford County Council

In partnership with schools and industry, the county council hopes to shape Longford's future through technology and its introduction to primary and secondary schools. The council's ambition and the programme's actions aims to see computer science as a Leaving Cert option in secondary schools throughout the county, driving the local economy in years to come.

Explore Cork Tourism Application – Cork County Council

In response to challenges facing the tourism sector following Covid-19, Cork County Council endeavoured to



Niamh O'Sullivan, Director of Services, Kerry County Council.

create a GIS tourism map in 2020 using in-house resources. The success of the map led to the development in 2021 by the council of the 'Explore Cork' app; this one-stop shop tourism app features over 850 places to see and things to do. It's the first of its kind to be developed by any local authority in Ireland.

Digital Local Government: Working for Everyone – LGMA

Ireland's new Local Government Digital and ICT Strategy aims to use digital and ICT to improve the way people work and deliver services in local government.

For further information regarding the individual projects email noac@housing.gov.ie



Kieran Keon, Senior (Principal) Social Worker, Galway County Council.



Sharon Corcoran, Director of Services, Economic Development, Enterprise and Tourism, Cork County Council.