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DEMOCRATISING ADVOCACY

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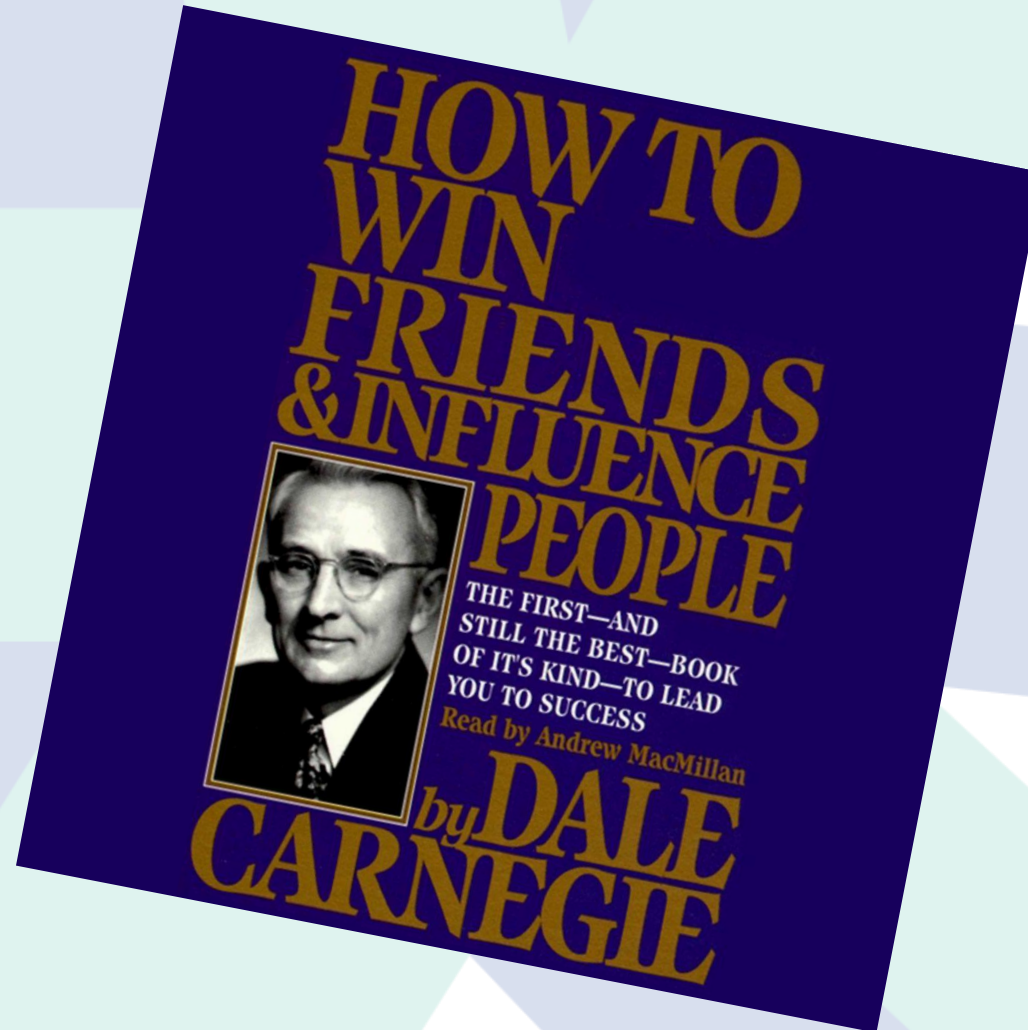
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Effective Political Communications

May 2025

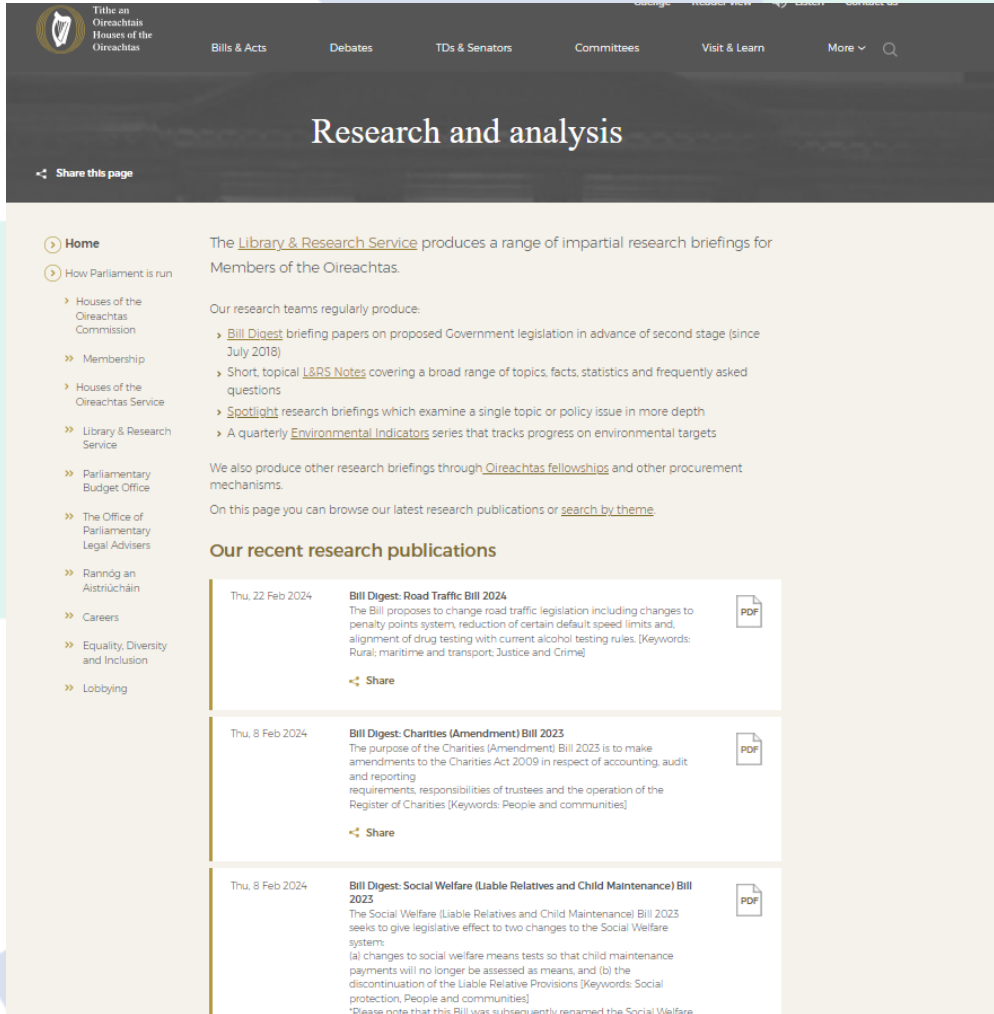
ronan.kennedy@iccl.ie

What are we talking about?



The Oireachtas & its Business:

How do I Keep Track of All This?



The screenshot shows the 'Research and analysis' section of the Oireachtas website. The header includes the Oireachtas logo and navigation links: Bills & Acts, Debates, TDs & Senators, Committees, Visit & Learn, and a search icon. The main heading is 'Research and analysis' with a 'Share this page' link. A left sidebar lists navigation options: Home, How Parliament is run, Houses of the Oireachtas Commission, Membership, Houses of the Oireachtas Service, Library & Research Service, Parliamentary Budget Office, The Office of Parliamentary Legal Advisers, Rannóg an Aistriúcháin, Careers, Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and Lobbying. The main content area explains that the Library & Research Service produces impartial research briefings for Members of the Oireachtas. It lists research products: Bill Digests (briefing papers on proposed Government legislation), L&RS Notes (short, topical notes on various topics), and Spotlight (research briefings on single topics or policy issues). It also mentions quarterly Environmental Indicators series and other research briefings through Oireachtas fellowships. A section titled 'Our recent research publications' lists three items: 'Bill Digest: Road Traffic Bill 2024' (dated Thu, 22 Feb 2024), 'Bill Digest: Charities (Amendment) Bill 2023' (dated Thu, 8 Feb 2024), and 'Bill Digest: Social Welfare (Liable Relatives and Child Maintenance) Bill 2023' (dated Thu, 8 Feb 2024). Each item includes a brief description of the bill's purpose and a 'Share' link.



How do I Keep Track of All This?

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
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Debates


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Dáil Éireann

Official Report latest update:
Thu, 8 Feb 2024: 38 topics were published, which include 105 speakers and 0 divisions of the House.

- Read this debate
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Seanad Éireann

Official Report latest update:
Thu, 8 Feb 2024: 14 topics were published, which include 43 speakers and 0 divisions of the House.

- Read this debate
- Watch Seanad debates
- Browse Seanad debates

Committees

Official Report latest update:
Meeting of the Committee Of Public Accounts on Thu, 8 Feb 2024.

- Read this debate
- Watch committee debates
- Browse Committee debates

PQs (Questions)

Official Report latest update:
Thu, 8 Feb 2024: 347 Parliamentary Questions answered.

- Read parliamentary questions

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When are debates published?

Dail debates are published incrementally throughout a sitting day. All proceedings before 7pm are published before midnight, and the remainder are added the following day. Replies to **questions tabled by Members for written** response by Ministers are published at the end of each day's Dáil proceedings.

Seanad debates are published on the same day or the next day. The Official Report of each **committee** meeting is published within a week at latest, but generally within two or three working days.

The Oireachtas & its Business:

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Date	Document	Format
Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Order of Business 13 - 15 February 2024	PDF
Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Tue)	PDF
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Thur)	PDF
Wed, 7 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Wed)	PDF
Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Seanad Order Paper (Tue)	PDF
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	Seanad Order Paper (Thur)	PDF

Chun an Aire Iompair: To the Minister for Transport.

*186. To ask the Minister for Transport what funding supports could be provided to a group (details supplied) for the purchase a vital piece of equipment. — Jackie Cahill. [6074/24]

*187. To ask the Minister for Transport to respond to concerns raised by a local organisation and service users (details supplied) in respect of the difficulty in securing disability-adapted taxis in County Louth; what measures are being, or could be, considered to increase the number of disability-friendly taxi units in County Louth; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Fergus O'Dowd. [6435/24]

*188. To ask the Minister for Transport to review correspondence (detail supplied) from Monaghan County Council; if he will address the issues outlined in same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Niamh Smyth. [6042/24]

*189. To ask the Minister for Transport to review correspondence (detail supplied) from Monaghan County Council; if he will address the issues outlined in same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Niamh Smyth. [6044/24]

*190. To ask the Minister for Transport to review correspondence (detail supplied) from Monaghan County Council; if he will address the issues outlined in same; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Niamh Smyth. [6045/24]

*191. To ask the Minister for Transport the funding that has been provided to Monaghan County Council for the maintenance and upkeep of local and regional roads in each of the years 2016-2023 inclusive and allocated in 2024, by year, by grant, in tabular form; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Matt Carthy. [6055/24]

*192. To ask the Minister for Transport the length of local public roads eligible for maintenance funding within each local authority; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Matt Carthy. [6056/24]

*193. To ask the Minister for Transport when the EV SPSV scheme for 2024 will open for applications; and if he will make a statement on the matter. — Catherine Murphy. [6064/24]

The Oireachtas & its Business:

How do I Keep Track of All This?

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Daily business papers

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 - Daily business papers**
 - Historical publications

For every sitting day, the Seanad publishes an Order Paper setting out the business before the House. The Seanad may also publish a Supplementary Order Paper.

You can see all the items of business before the Dáil on the [Dáil Business](#) website. The Dáil publishes a daily Questions Paper, which contains the texts of all oral, priority and written questions for the day.

The Dáil Order Paper is available in digital format on the Dáil Business website. All items of business before Dáil Éireann are listed there.

- Visit Dáil Business
- Browse Order Papers published from 2004 to 2021

Questions papers

Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Order of Business 13 - 15 February 2024	PDF
Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Tue)	PDF
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Thur)	PDF
Wed, 7 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Wed)	PDF

See all question papers

Seanad business papers

Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Seanad Order Paper (Tue)	PDF
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	Seanad Order Paper (Thur)	PDF

The screenshot shows the 'Parliamentary questions' section of the Oireachtas website. The header includes the Oireachtas logo and navigation links: Bills & Acts, Debates, TDs & Senators, Committees, Visit & Learn, and More. The main heading is 'Parliamentary questions'. Below this, there is a sidebar with links to Debates, Find a debate, Find a vote, Parliamentary questions (highlighted), Written questions, Oral questions, Search tips, and Utterances having an adverse effect. The main content area explains that questions and answers published after July 2012 can be viewed here. It includes a search filter with options for 'Show' (Questions and answers), 'For' (Dáil or Seanad term), 'From' (21/02/2020), 'To' (22/02/2024), 'Term' (33rd Dáil), 'By' (Member, Department, Member), and 'View by' (day). There is an 'Update list' button. Below the filter, there is a section titled 'Questions and answers for Dáil or Seanad term' with a search bar. It shows a list of questions and answers, with the first one being 'Wed, 21 Feb 2024' and a 'View' button next to it. The list continues with 'Tue, 20 Feb 2024', 'Thu, 15 Feb 2024', 'Wed, 14 Feb 2024', 'Tue, 13 Feb 2024', 'Thu, 8 Feb 2024', 'Wed, 7 Feb 2024', 'Thu, 1 Feb 2024', and 'Wed, 31 Jan 2024', each with a 'View' button.

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Parliamentary questions

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Questions and answers published **after July 2012** can be viewed here. Viewing by Government Department is possible by term or specific dates from **March 2016** onwards. Written answers are published as received from departments. To see parliamentary questions published before July 2012, search in [Dáil debates](#).

Show: Questions and answers For: Dáil or Seanad term Update list

From: 21/02/2020 To: 22/02/2024 Term: 33rd Dáil

By: ☒ Member ☐ Department ☒ Member: All Members View by: day

Questions and answers for Dáil or Seanad term

Search within this list... Clear search

Page 1 of 23 Show: 50 per page

Wed, 21 Feb 2024	View
Tue, 20 Feb 2024	View
Thu, 15 Feb 2024	View
Wed, 14 Feb 2024	View
Tue, 13 Feb 2024	View
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	View
Wed, 7 Feb 2024	View
Thu, 1 Feb 2024	View
Wed, 31 Jan 2024	View

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- Visit Dáil Business
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Questions papers

Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Order of Business 13 - 15 February 2024	PDF
Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Tue)	PDF
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Thur)	PDF
Wed, 7 Feb 2024	Dáil Question Paper (Wed)	PDF

See all question papers

Seánad business papers

Tue, 13 Feb 2024	Seánad Order Paper (Tue)	PDF
Thu, 8 Feb 2024	Seánad Order Paper (Thur)	PDF

Back to Debates

10000 results for ""louth"" filtered by Questions and answers and Dáil or Seanad term.

Sort by:

Date

Page 1 of 200 Show: 50 per page

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

46. Deputy Paula Butterly asked the Minister for Transport if he will consider funding a...

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2025-05-08/46/#pq_46

Thu, 8 May 2025 - necessary, entering into a public private partnership, in order to deliver a new transport hub for the mid Louth

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

71. Deputy Ruairí Ó Murchú asked the Minister for Transport if he will provide an updat...

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2025-05-08/71/#pq_71

Thu, 8 May 2025 - Transport if he will provide an update on the progress being made to complete the N53 road project in Louth

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

99. Deputy Darren O'Rourke asked the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sp...

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2025-05-08/99/#pq_99

Thu, 8 May 2025 - I have had many dealings with Louth and Meath tourism....Hopefully, Louth will undo the wrong done to them. Deputy Darren O'Rourke No, no, no....Deputy Patrick O'Donovan I am just

The Oireachtas & its Business:

How do I Keep Track of All This?

Thursday, 8 May 2025

Questions (46)



Paula Butterly

< Paula Butterly

Question:

46. **Deputy Paula Butterly** asked the **Minister for Transport** if he will consider funding and, if necessary, entering into a public private partnership, in order to deliver a new transport hub for the mid **Louth**/ Drogheda area that would include a new train station, park and ride and bus facilities; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [22198/25]

[View answer](#)

Written answers



Minister for
Transport

< As Minister for Transport, I have responsibility for policy and overall funding in relation to public transport. The National Transport Authority (NTA) is leading the development and roll-out of strategic park and ride sites nation-wide through the Park and Ride Development Office (PRDO).

The function of the PRDO is to enable and advance the delivery of strategic Park and Ride sites in collaboration with Local Authorities and transport agencies across all regions of the State, by providing full-time specialist recourses on these projects.

I am currently unaware of plans for a new train station on the north side of Drogheda, though this can be kept under review as the population changes. An additional station would require funding and would have to secure relevant approvals required under the Infrastructure Guidelines. Iarnród Éireann will engage with any parties proposing a new station and my Department will continue to keep me informed of this issue.

Noting the NTA's responsibility in the development and roll-out of strategic park and ride sites, I have referred the Deputy's question to the NTA for a direct reply. Please contact my private office if you do not receive a reply.

The Oireachtas & its Business:



The screenshot shows the 'Constituency Dashboards' website. The header includes the Oireachtas logo and name in Irish and English, a language selector 'GA/EN', and the title 'Constituency Dashboards'. A sidebar on the left contains icons for various services. The main content area welcomes users to the 2022 census data dashboards and provides instructions on how to get started. A dropdown menu for selecting a constituency is shown with 'Louth' selected. A footer note directs users to the Irish version of the site via the GA/EN link.

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GA/EN

Constituency Dashboards

Seirbhís Leabharlainne 7 Taighde
Library & Research Service

Welcome to the Constituency Dashboards for 2022 census data.

To get started, please select your constituency and click on a theme

Select your Constituency

Louth

To see the Irish version of this site click GA/EN on the top bar



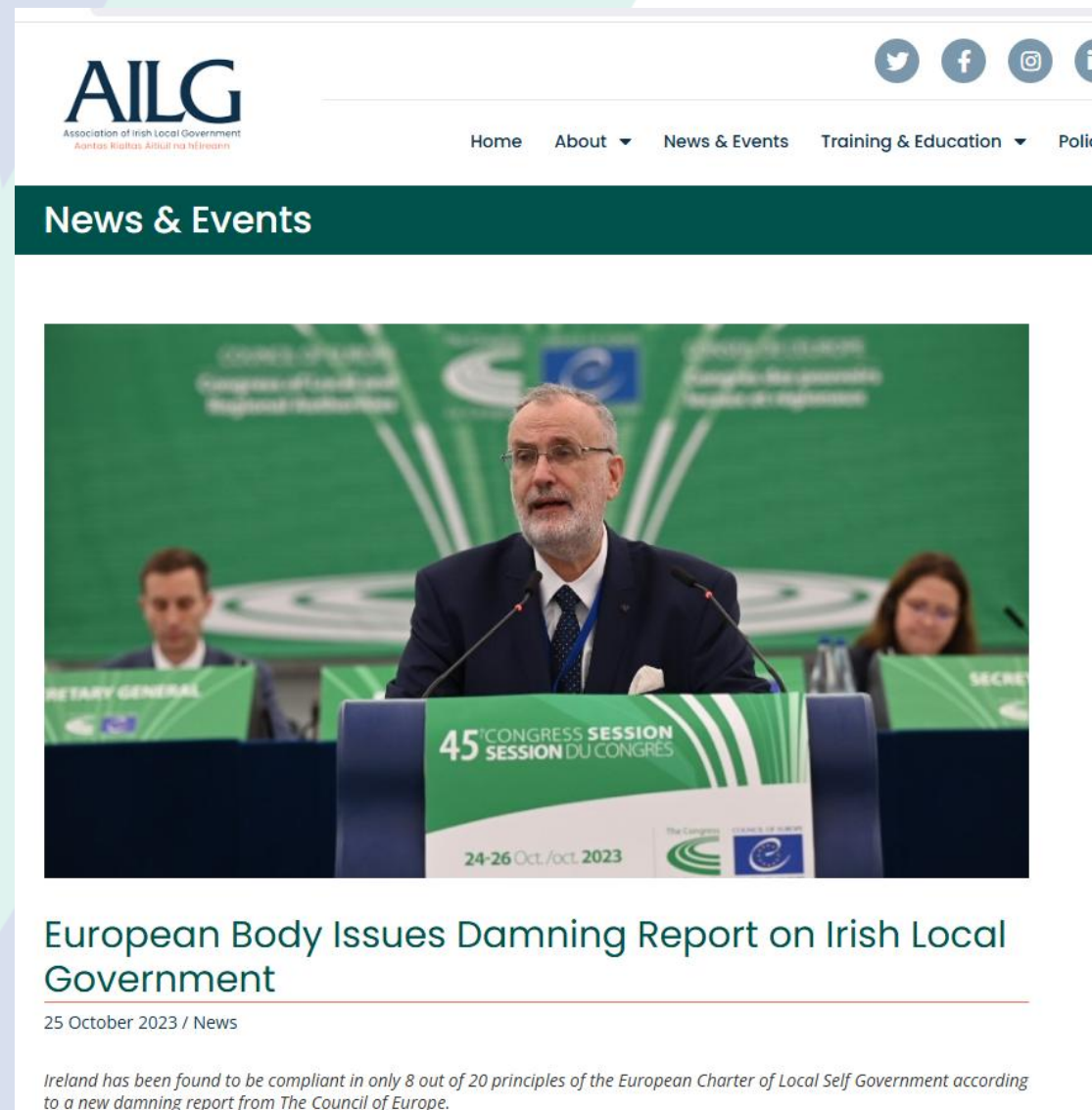
Local Government in Ireland:

What powers do Councillors have?

- Very weak by European standards
- Education and Training Boards (ETBs)
- Community education
- Libraries
- County/City Development Plan
- Submitting questions/motions
- Area Committees/Policy Committees

No Influence on:

- Planning decisions
- Housing applications



Local Government in Ireland:

What do the Councils Make Public?

- Varies widely based on the local authority
- Some are very prompt and transparent
- Others actively frustrate, e.g. delayed missing meeting agendas, no videos live-streams etc.
- Push your Council and Councilors!

'Transparency and accountability are not dirty words' – Laois County Council vote to block live streaming again

By Mark Comerford - 22nd October 2024



But the Government parties were not for turning, with Fianna Fáil Councillor Paddy Bracken first to oppose the motion.

"We rejected this idea at the last meeting. The thing that bugs me every time I hear about transparency, transparency – implying that there's something wrong," Cllr Bracken said.

"Every second word is 'transparency.' I'm over 37 years in local politics and I've never seen anything wrong in my time.

"I'm not afraid of anyone or to be put in front of any forum; we rejected it at the last meeting and I'm proposing we reject again.

Local Government in Ireland:

Area Committee

Area Committees deal with operational matters such as;

- road sweeping & maintenance,
- traffic related issues,
- cleansing,
- litter,
- playgrounds,
- grass cutting,
- street tree maintenance.

They also operate on a strategic level dealing with matters pertaining to the Local Area such as;

- Taking-in-charge,
- building control,
- enforcement,
- new works,
- disposals, property,
- parks & heritage,
- planning & local area plans

Policy Committee

Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) are Local Authority Committees whose membership includes Elected Councillors, representatives of business, farming interests, environmental/conservation groups, trade unions and community and voluntary members.

It is the task of the Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs), as committees of the council, to advise and assist the council in the formulation, development and review of policy.

They have no remit in relation to routine operational matters regarding the delivery of services.

The SPC system is intended to give councillors and relevant sectoral interests an opportunity for full involvement in the policy making process from the early stages.

The chairperson of an SPC is appointed by the local authority while the sectoral interests are nominated by their organisation/group.

Local Government in Ireland:

Local Electoral Areas: Example Louth County Council

Party	Seats
Sinn Féin	7
Fine Gael	6
Fianna Fáil	6
Labour	2
Green	1
Independent	7
Total	29

[Full list of councilors for Louth](#)



Local Government in Ireland:

Committee Structure: Example Louth County Council

Strategic Policy Committees



• Your Council

- Latest News
- Cathaoirleach of Council
- Membership
- Agenda Council Meetings
- Boundary Maps
- Bye Laws of Council

• Committees of Council

- Corporate Policy Group
- Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- Placenames Committee

The statutory basis for SPCs is set out in Section 48 of the Local Government Act 2001 as amended by Section 48 (1a) of the Local Government Reform Act 2014.

Strategic Policy Committees advise and assist the Council in its work and are tasked with the formulation and development of policy for approval by Council.

The Strategic Policy Committee Scheme 2019 - 2024 can be viewed here: [Louth County Council SPC Scheme 2019-2024](#)

There are five Strategic Policy Committees (SPCs) in Louth County Council

These are:

- › Economic Development and Enterprise Support
- › Planning and Support Infrastructure
- › Housing
- › Community, Quality of Life and Creativity
- › Climate Action and Energy

The Strategic Policy Committee Standing Orders can be viewed here: [Strategic Policy Committees Standing Orders](#)

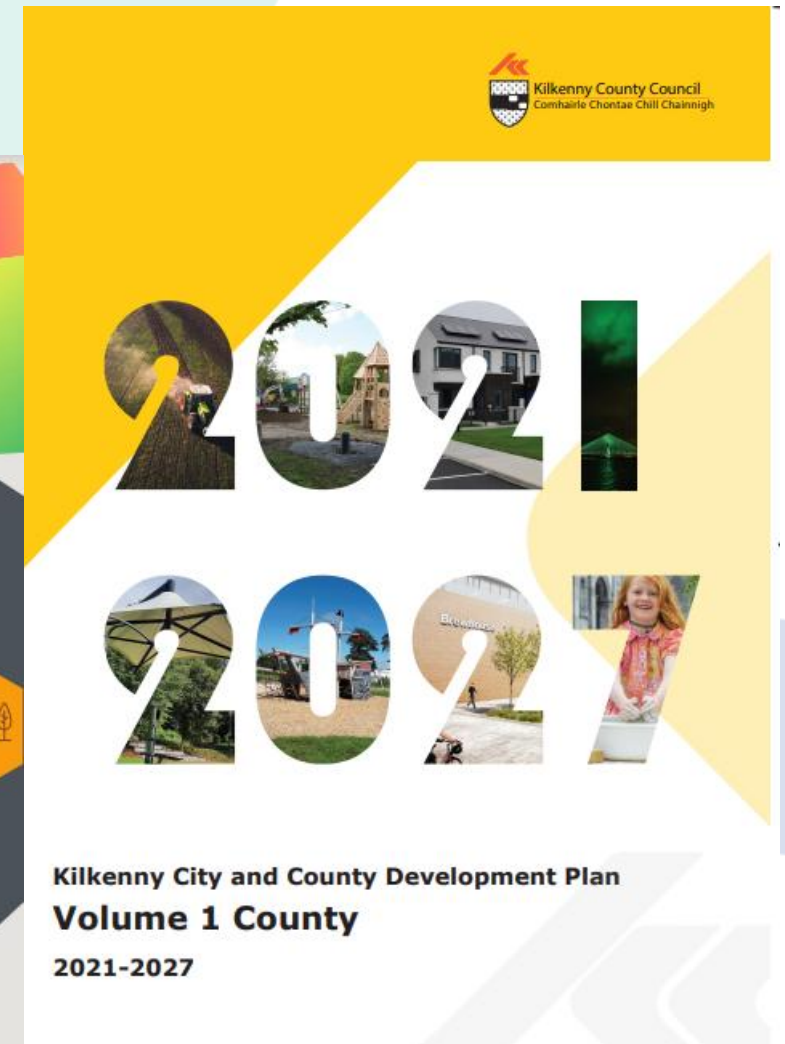
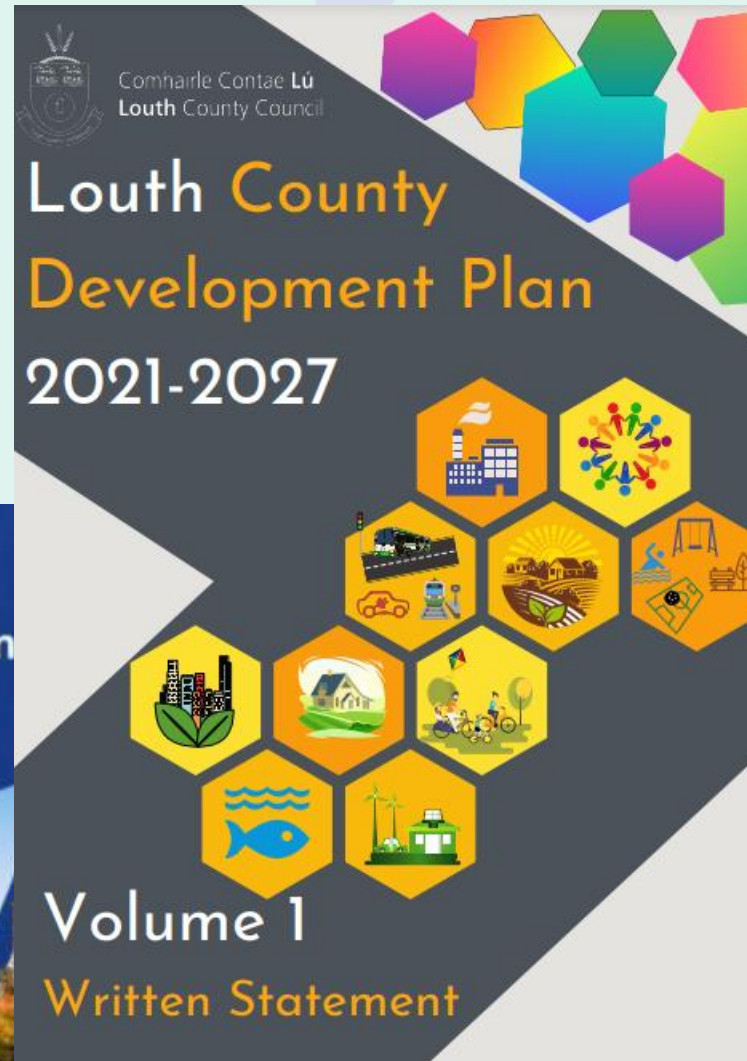
Minutes of the SPC Meetings can be found [here](#)

What should we be saying and how?

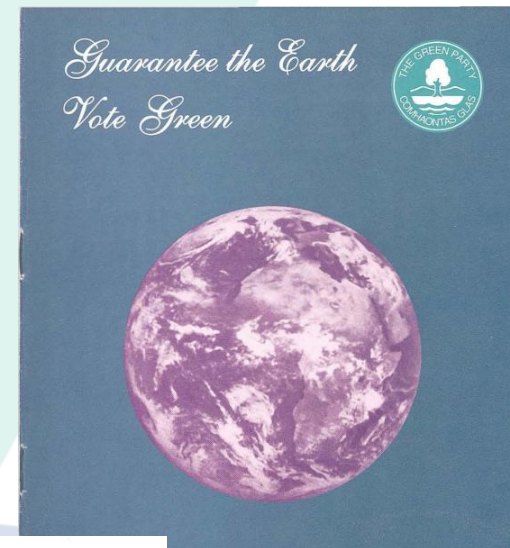
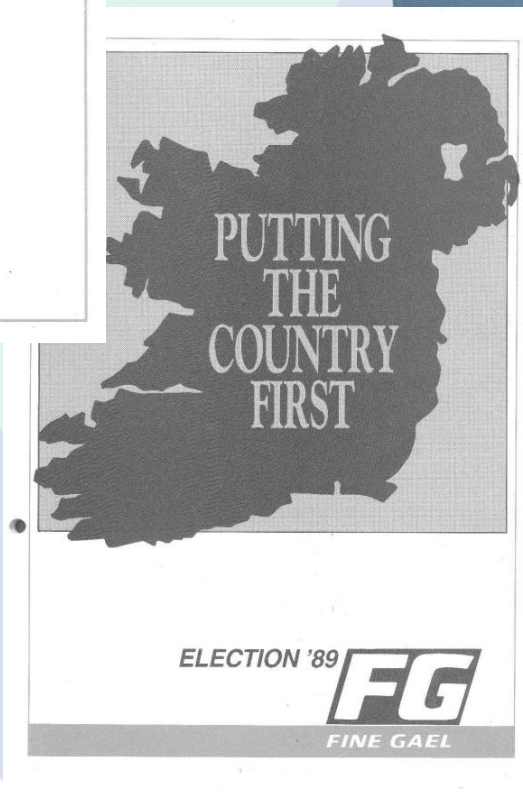
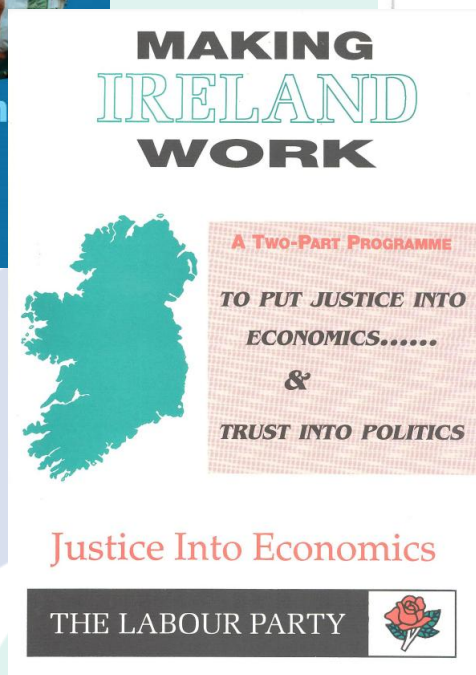
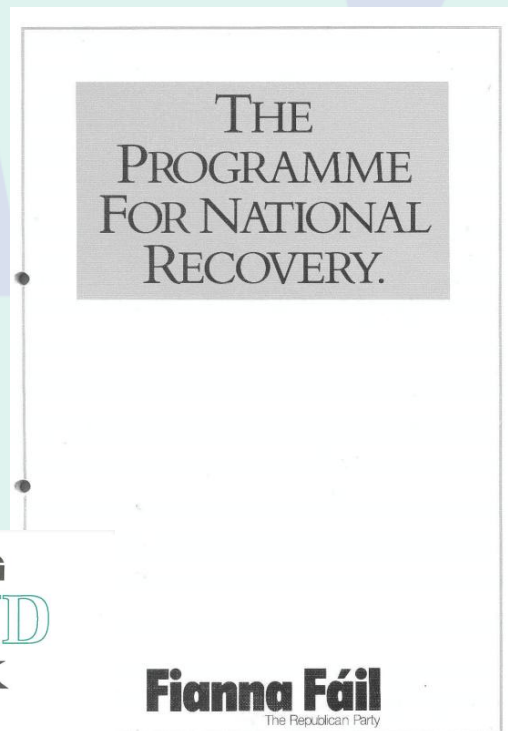
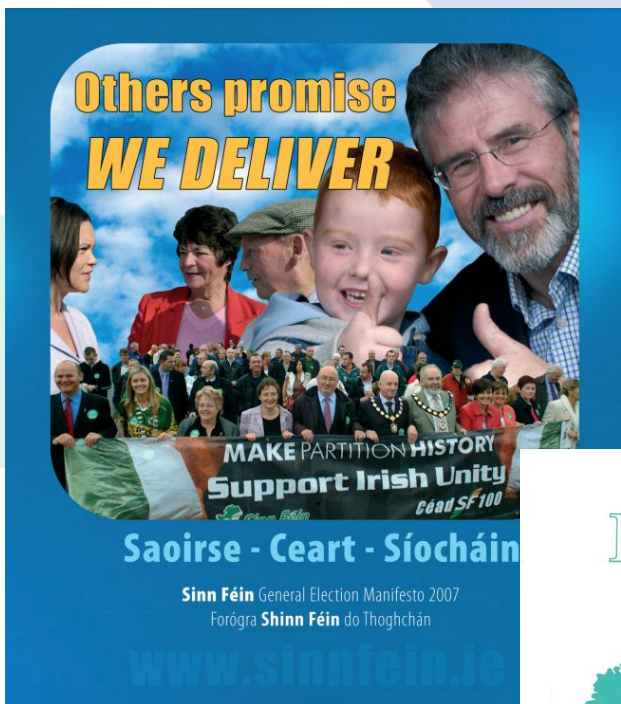
The screenshot shows the website of Louth County Council. The header includes the council's crest and name 'Comhairle Contae Lú Louth County Council'. There are links for 'Skip to Content', 'Gaeilge', 'Contact', and a search bar. A navigation menu lists 'Home', 'Services', 'Your Council', 'Publications', and 'Policy and Redress'. The main content area shows a breadcrumb trail: 'Home > Publications > Development Plans / Local Area Plans > Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027'. Below this is the section title 'Development Plans / Local Area Plans' with share and print icons. A list of documents follows, each with a plus icon for expansion:

- Drogheda Joint Local Area Plan
- Dundalk Local Area Plan 2024-2030
- Two Year Progress Report on the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Consolidated Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (incl Variations 1 & 2)
- Variation No. 2 to the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Variation No. 1 to the Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027
- Louth County Development Plan 2021-2027 (Volumes 1-5)
- Plean Forbartha Chontae Lú 2021-2027

What should we be saying and how?



What should we be saying and how?



What should we be saying and how?

Programme for Government

Our Shared Future



AGREED PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT 1989 - 1993

Published by the Progressive Democrats
25 South Frederick Street, Dublin 2



A GOVERNMENT OF RENEWAL

A Policy Agreement between
Fine Gael
The Labour Party
Democratic Left

December 1994

An Agreed Programme
for
Government
between
Fianna Fáil
and the
Progressive Democrats

What should we be saying and how?

Programme for Government

Our Shared Future



AGREED PROGRAMME
FOR GOVERNMENT
1989 - 1993

Published by the Progressive Democrats
25 South Frederick Street, Dublin 1

Programme for Government 2025

Securing Ireland's Future

GOVERNMENT RENEWAL

Agreement between
Fine Gael
Labour Party
Democratic Left

December 1994



An Agreed Programme
for
Government
between
Fianna Fáil
and the
Progressive Democrats

June 2002

Where do we gather information from?

In short:

- **Parliamentary Question (PQ) Database**
- **Party Spokespeople/local reps**
- **Committee Membership (Oireachtas and Council)**
- **Oireachtas/Council Debate databases**
- **Manifestos, programme for government**
- **County Development Plans**
- **Local area plans**

What should we be saying and how?

- **Do a bit of background digging, show them you see what is currently happening and what their party position is**
- **Find (or make up!) a reason to get in contact**
- **Flatter (a bit) but don't lay it on too thick!**
- **Include something that means they have to get back to you, for example, ask them to table a PQ or council question, ask for a meeting to discuss your work on their area of policy, ask if they have plans to discuss this issue at their committee**
- **Follow up! If you don't hear back in a week, give their office a call and do the "just wanted to make sure that the deputy received this" spiel.**
- **Be aware: Sometimes no response, is a response. If getting nowhere with a target, move on**

Practical Example 1: A “Cold” approach

- **Organisation:** Louth Residents for Clean Air (LRCA)
- **Objective:** To promote improved air quality in Louth
- **Issue:** While smoky coal is banned from sale in Ireland, there are reports of it being brought in from the North. LRCA want more info on this


Find what the government is saying:

Dáil Éireann debate -
Thursday, 4 May 2023
Vol. 1037 No. 5

Saincheisteanna Tráthúla - Topical Issue Debate

[Back to table of contents](#)

Fuel Sales



Deputy Jackie Cahill

I thank the Minister of State for being in the Chamber to discuss this issue. Last week, I met a delegation of solid fuel merchants who are members of a newly formed organisation. Every town and village in the country has a fuel merchant. Unfair competition is shattering their trade. Approximately 50% of the coal that is being used in the country is coming down from Northern Ireland. It is estimated that €100 million worth of coal products will come from the Six Counties into the Twenty-six Counties this year. For better or worse, we have a carbon tax in this country. VAT is also applied to solid fuel products. That puts our fuel merchants in a completely unviable situation whereby they are not able to compete with the products coming from Northern Ireland. Those products are not subject to carbon tax and VAT in the same way as products sourced in the Twenty-six Counties. The vast majority of the products coming down are illegal to be used in the South. Smoky coal is the principal such product. It has been banned in the Twenty-six Counties. Smoky coal is coming down from Northern Ireland in very large quantities nonetheless.


Customs and Excise
Dáil Éireann Debate, Wednesday - 29 March 2023

Wednesday, 29 March 2023

Questions (82, 83)


Michael Lowry

Question:
82. Deputy Michael Lowry asked the Minister for Finance the number of seizures conducted by customs officials on illegally imported solid fuels in 2021 and 2022; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [15687/23]
[View answer](#)


Michael Lowry

Question:
83. Deputy Michael Lowry asked the Minister for Finance the amount of funding that has been provided to the Revenue Commissioners in the years 2021, 2022 and to date in 2023 to combat smuggling of solid fuels; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [15688/23]
[View answer](#)

Written answers

The importation of solid fuels that do not comply with Ireland's environmental law and standards is not an offence under tax law, and Revenue has no role in instigating prosecutions for breaches of environmental law. Such matters come within the responsibility of local authorities. The Air Pollution Act 1987 (Solid Fuels) Regulations 2022, which were introduced in October last year, significantly enhance the State's regulatory regime underpinning environmental standards for solid fuels. The regulations empower Local Authorities to take enforcement actions, including prosecutions, against solid fuel producers, importers, distributors, retailers, and users to ensure all solid fuels placed on the market and used in the State comply with relevant standards. The regulations place specific obligations on anyone transporting solid fuels, including requirements that accompanying documentation, detailing fuel source, destination and compliance with environmental standards are available for inspection by Local Authority staff. Further information on the operation of the regulations can be found at www.gov.ie/en/publication/e3da2-air-quality/#new-solid-fuel-regulations.

Nonetheless, while Revenue does not have a direct role itself in relation to these environmental enforcement matters, Revenue is aware of the benefit that inter-agency enforcement co-operation can bring to the effective implementation of the range of State laws applicable to a sector. In this regard, Revenue have participated in several joint operations with other agencies including Local Authority solid fuel inspection teams, with a view to checking for compliance across several tax headings, including SFCT. Revenue is currently actively engaging with Local Authorities with a view to participating in future joint operations.

Practical Example 1: A “Cold” approach

Find your hook:

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Questions and answers

Dáil or Seanad term

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260 results for "smoky coal" filtered by Questions and answers and Dáil or Seanad term.

Sort by:

Date

Page 1 of 6 Show: 50 per page

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

124. Deputy Patrick Costello asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications the amount of dedicated funding that will be provided to each local authority to monitor and enforce the smoky coal ban and any future solid fuel regulations as part of the clean air strategy; and if he will make

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2024-03-05/124/#pq_124
Tue, 5 Mar 2024 - amount of dedicated funding that will be provided to each local authority to monitor and enforce the smoky coal ban and any future solid fuel regulations as part of the clean air strategy; and if he will make

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

138. Deputy Jackie Cahill asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications the amount of dedicated funding that will be provided to each local authority to monitor and enforce the smoky coal ban and any future solid fuel regulations as part of the clean air strategy; and if he will make

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-11-07/138/#pq_138
Tue, 7 Nov 2023 - market irrespective of the type of fuel type being sold as these taxes apply to both low smoke and smoky coal products.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

147. Deputy Michael Healy-Rae asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications the amount of dedicated funding that will be provided to each local authority to monitor and enforce the smoky coal ban and any future solid fuel regulations as part of the clean air strategy; and if he will make

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-10-03/147/#pq_147
Tue, 3 Oct 2023 - market irrespective of the type of fuel type being sold as these taxes apply to both low smoke and smoky coal products.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

82. Deputy Michael Lowry asked the Minister for Finance the number of seizures conducted by custom of smoky coal, which is significantly cheaper than smokeless coal.

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-03-29/82/#pq_82
Wed, 29 Mar 2023 - particularly relevant with regard to coal as there are no restrictions in NI on the sale or use of smoky coal, which is significantly cheaper than smokeless coal.

PARLIAMENTARY QUESTION

83. Deputy Michael Lowry asked the Minister for Finance the amount of funding that has been provided to local authorities to monitor and enforce the smoky coal ban and any future solid fuel regulations as part of the clean air strategy; and if he will make

https://www.oireachtas.ie/en/debates/question/2023-03-29/83/#pq_83
Wed, 29 Mar 2023 - particularly relevant with regard to coal as there are no restrictions in NI on the sale or use of smoky coal, which is significantly cheaper than smokeless coal.

Tuesday, 5 March 2024

Questions (124)



Patrick Costello

Patrick Costello

Question:

124. Deputy Patrick Costello asked the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications the amount of dedicated funding that will be provided to each local authority to monitor and enforce the smoky coal ban and any future solid fuel regulations as part of the clean air strategy; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [10503/24]

[View answer](#)

Written answers



Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications

Local Authorities are responsible for the enforcement of the solid fuel regulations, identifying unauthorised fuels placed on the market and taking measures to counteract any illegal trade. They are also responsible for the allocation of appropriate resources to ensure that they can fulfil their air quality enforcement obligations. It is at the discretion of each Local Authority to decide its own priorities and to allocate staff and resources accordingly. Funding of such services would generally be met from the Exchequer and Local Authority own resources.

My Department has worked with the Local Government Management Agency to develop the business case for an enhanced enforcement structure to support the provision of improved co-ordination, expertise and advice to underpin consistent implementation of all air quality legislation across the country. I have made funding of up to €3m available to support this regional enforcement group and I expect the business case to be submitted formally to the sector for approval in the coming months.

In the absence of a co-ordination body, officials from my Department have been engaging directly with enforcement personnel on the ground, developing guidance and training, holding workshops, providing funding, and supporting the sharing of best practice in relation to a range of air quality legislative obligations that are under the remit of the Local Authorities. In the last two years I have provided grant funding of over €600,000 to support enforcement efforts on the ground, including a solid fuels sampling programme and an online sales pilot project.

Our focus for 2024 will be targeted at working with specific Local Authorities that have significant air quality issues.

Louth: Details Correct as of 13/05/25

Party	TD	Role
Fine Gael	Paula Butterly 	Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage
Sinn Féin	Joanna Byrne 	Committee of Public Accounts Committee on Arts, Media, Communications, Culture and Sport Committee on Standing Orders and Dáil Reform Sinn Féin Spokesperson on Media, Communications, and Sport
Fianna Fáil	Erin McGreehan 	Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, and Taoiseach Working Group of Committee Cathaoirligh Fianna Fáil Spokesperson on Research and Innovation
Labour	Ged Nash 	Committee on Finance, Public Expenditure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation, and Taoiseach Labour Spokesperson on Finance; Public Expenditure, Infrastructure, Public Service Reform and Digitalisation.
Sinn Féin	Ruairí Ó Murchú 	Sinn Féin Spokesperson on Disability

Practical Example 1: A “Cold” approach

Build your case:

Programme for Government 2025: Programme for Government 2020:

Fine Gael Manifesto 2024:

This Government will:

- Increase penalties to deter littering and illegal dumping, ensuring those who harm our environment face significant consequences.
- Target dumping black spots and use tools like CCTV and drones to monitor dumping hotspots, making it easier to catch and penalise offenders.
- Work with local authorities for cleaner public spaces to ensure cities, towns, and villages are cleaned more thoroughly and regularly, improving quality of life and community pride.
- Continue efforts to raise **air quality** standards, especially in urban areas, ensuring healthier environments for all.
- Prioritise urban greening of the existing built environment in cities, towns and villages

A National Clean Air Strategy

We will publish the first ever clean air strategy. We will:

- Develop a regional approach to air quality and noise enforcement.
- Develop a multi-agency approach to clamping down on the sale of high-sulphur content fuel imported from the UK, with local authorities and the Revenue Commissioners involved.
- Invest in our network of monitoring stations, to provide scientific evidence of air quality across different parts of the country, including real-time and localised air quality information.
- Extend the **Smoky** Coal ban to new towns and, over the term of Government, move towards a full nationwide ban.

Fine Gael will:

- **Implement the Nature Restoration Law with Community Engagement:** Ensure the Nature Restoration Law is fairly applied, with sufficient funding and in consultation with local communities to balance conservation with local needs.
- **Set Geographic Biodiversity Targets:** Commit to clear targets within the National Biodiversity Plan, working closely with local authorities to achieve meaningful progress in each area.
- **Restore National Parks and Natural Assets:** Conduct assessments of biodiversity in national parks, water bodies, bogs, and other natural sites in each county, and commit to actions to restore and protect these critical ecosystems.
- **Improve Urban Air Quality:** Continue efforts to raise air quality standards, especially in urban areas, ensuring healthier environments for all.

Practical Example 1: A “Cold” approach

Pull it all together:

➤

Send

From ▾

ronan.kennedy@iccl.ie

To

Cc

Bcc

Subject

Local Authority Solid Fuel Inspection Teams

Dear Deputy Butterly

I am contacting you today on behalf of Louth Residents for Clean Air (LRCA) as both our local TD and in your role as a member of the committee on Committee on Housing, Local Government and Heritage.

2

We are a Louth based group who lobby for clean air in urban environments in our County. Our group strongly welcomed the ban on the sale of smoky coal in Ireland in 2022 and note this a key achievement of Fine Gael in Government. Despite this achievement however, we remain very concerned about the illegal importation of this damaging product from Northern Ireland which has a strong impact on border communities. We know that the matter of powers of local government are important to you given your time as a councillor and your role in the Oireachtas so we were hoping that you could assist us with our work.

4

We note that the matter of imports of smoky coal was with Minister Ryan by way of a PQ on March 5th last year. In his reply, the Minister outlined that;

3

"Officials from [his] Department have been engaging directly with enforcement personnel on the ground, developing guidance and training, holding workshops, providing funding, and supporting the sharing of best practice in relation to a range of air quality legislative obligations that are under the remit of the Local Authorities. In the last two years [he has] provided grant funding of over €600,000 to support enforcement efforts on the ground, including a solid fuels sampling programme and an online sales pilot project."

6

We would be extremely interested in finding out more about the enforcement efforts since 2022 and more details of how much of the grant funding has been dispersed to Louth County Council. To this end, we would be very grateful if you would consider submitting the below PQ on our behalf?

7

The issue of clean air in our communities is one that has a serious impact on your constituents so we welcome your efforts to raise the matter with the Minister.

5

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you to discuss our work in more detail.

8

Best regards,

Ronan Kennedy

To ask the Minister for the Environment, Climate and Communications, further to question 124 of March 5th 2024, if he will provide details in a tabular form broken down by year, item and local authority, the monetary total allocated to each county or city council of the €600,000 in grant aid since 2022, if he will provide more details of the enforcement actions as outlined in the response and if he will make a statement on the matter.

Ronan Kennedy (He/Him)
Letterkenny Residents for Clean Air (LRCA)

ROCHTAIN
DEMOCRATISING ADVOCACY

Practical Example 1: A “Cold” approach

Pull it all together:

- 1 Be specific with your subject line, show you’ve done some digging
- 2 Introduce your organisation, but be brief, maybe consider including a link to your website or social media, if you have a recent related publication or other bit of work, attach it along with a 1-2 page summary
- 3 A bit of flattery goes a long way here, but ground it in something tangible
- 4 Don’t make them dig for something you reference, again consider linking to the question or speech
- 5 Again, be specific here, show you know your area of expertise and what you want to dig further into
- 6 This is your hook, ask a question or make a request, give them a reason to have to have to get back to you
- 7 All politics is local, so try and localise your issue (if possible), link it to your issue and offer to meet to discuss
- 8 Most (TD) offices will submit PQs for you, but if you draft them the chances of success increase more
All PQs follow the same format: To ask the Minister for XXX.....and if they will make a statement on the matter

Practical Example 2: A “Warm” approach

- **Organisation:** Drogheda Residents Against Dereliction (DRAD)
- **Objective:** To tackle vacant and derelict commercial property in Drogheda
- **Issue:** The town of Drogheda has a severe problem with empty commercial properties.

Find what local TDs are saying:

Tuesday, 9 April 2024

Questions (284)



[Ged Nash](#)

← **Ged Nash**

Question:

284. **Deputy Ged Nash** asked the **Minister for Finance** the number of successful Living City Initiative applications made to renovate and refurbish properties in Limerick, Galway, Waterford and Kilkenny respectively in the years 2021, 2022 and 2023; the reasons **Drogheda** is not included in the initiative, given its population is significantly larger than that of Kilkenny; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [13848/24]

[View answer](#)

Written answers



[Minister for Finance](#)

← The Living City Initiative (LCI) is a modest, targeted, measure which is aimed at very specific areas in urgent need of regeneration, it is provided for under sections 372AAA to 372AAD of the Taxes Consolidation Act 1997. It offers income or corporation tax relief for qualifying expenditure incurred in the refurbishment and conversion of qualifying residential and commercial buildings located within 'Special Regeneration Areas' in Cork, Dublin, Galway, Kilkenny, Limerick and Waterford.

Applications are required to be made to the relevant Local Authority in respect of residential projects. Revenue obtains information from the Local Authorities in respect to the number of applications received by them. Based on the most recent information available to Revenue, the number of total applications per eligible city since the introduction of the scheme are as follows:

Tuesday, 23 July 2024

Questions (1166)



[Imelda Munster](#)

← **Imelda Munster**

Question:

1166. **Deputy Imelda Munster** asked the **Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage** his plans to address the situation of dereliction in **Drogheda**, and if he will make a statement on the matter. [33217/24]

[View answer](#)

Written answers



[Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage](#)

← Addressing vacancy and making efficient use of existing housing stock is a key priority for Government.

The Vacant Homes Action Plan, which I originally published in January 2023, built on Pathway 4 of Housing for All and set out the various actions that were being pursued to return vacant properties back into use as homes. In April I published an update on the Action Plan which shows the significant progress that is being made and it is available here on my Department's website: gov - Vacant Homes Action Plan 2023-2026 (www.gov.ie) .

A key initiative under the Action Plan to address vacancy and dereliction has been the introduction of the Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant under the Croí Cónaithe Towns Fund. From May 2023, up to a maximum of €50,000 in grant funding is available to support the refurbishment of a vacant property into a home. Where the property is confirmed as derelict, up to a maximum of €70,000 in grant funding is available.

Also as part of the Action Plan, I announced a €150 million Urban Regeneration and Development Fund (URDF) for local authorities to acquire vacant or derelict properties for reuse or sale, using their compulsory purchase powers were necessary.

Thursday, 9 March 2023

Questions (91, 143)



[Fergus O'Dowd](#)

← **Fergus O'Dowd**

Question:

91. **Deputy Fergus O'Dowd** asked the **Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage** if there are any further plans to amend existing regulations exempting certain types of **vacant** commercial premises from planning permission in order to maximise the number of **vacant** units being brought back into use; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [11866/23]

[View answer](#)



[Willie O'Dea](#)

← **Willie O'Dea**

Question:

143. **Deputy Willie O'Dea** asked the **Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage** if he will provide an update on the notifications received by local authorities under planning permission exemptions for converting certain **vacant** commercial properties into homes; and if he will make a statement on the matter. [11596/23]

[View answer](#)

Oral answers (6 contributions)




[Deputy Fergus O'Dowd](#)

← One hundred years ago, many people lived above commercial premises in the centre of Drogheda. Today, very few people live there. What further and additional regulations can he amend- obviously, I exclude those relating to health and safety - in order to encourage more people to live in the centre of our towns and over commercial premises nationally.

Practical Example 2: A “Warm” approach


- **Organisation:** Drogheda Residents Against Dereliction (DRAD)
- **Objective:** To tackle vacant and derelict commercial property in Drogheda
- **Issue:** The town of Drogheda has a severe problem with empty commercial properties.


Find what local TDs are saying:



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Practical Example 2: A “Warm” approach

Send

From ▾

ronan.kennedy@iccl.ie

To

ged.nash@oireachtas.ie; paula.butterly@oireachtas.ie; joanna.byrne@oireachtas.ie; Erin McGreehan; ruairi.omurchu@oireachtas.ie;

Cc

pio.smith@louthcoco.ie; debbie.mccole@louthcoco.ie; kevin.callan@louthcoco.ie; james.byrne@louthcoco.ie; paddy.mcquillan@louthcoco.ie; ejiro.oharestratton@louthcoco.ie; |

Bcc

Subject

Drogheda Dereliction Issues 1

Dear Deputies and Councillors,

I am contacting you today on behalf of Drogheda Residents Against Dereliction (DRAD). We are a newly formed group who are very concerned about the fragmented approach being taken by both the Government and the Council with respect to the serious issues of dereliction in and around Drogheda. We note with appreciation that Deputy Nash, has raised these issues in the Dáil but we believe the responses show a lack of joined up thinking.

To this end, we are seeking to draw together existing efforts by politicians at a local and national level to address this issue. We are asking, firstly, that all Louth TDs submit a joint request for a topical debate on this matter as soon as possible. We wish to see the text of this request reflect the disjointed nature of the approaches taken so far to the issue.

We would be grateful if you could inform us as to when you intend to submit this request.

Secondly, we are seeking to schedule a meeting with all councillors for the Drogheda urban area and all available TDs. The date for this meeting will be decided following the topical debate so as to allow us to use the Ministerial response as a basis for discussion and to kick off our campaigning work on this issue.

We look forward to engaging with you on this important issue.

Ronan Kennedy (He/Him)



Chairperson Drogheda Residents Against Dereliction (DRAD).


Practical Example 2: A “Warm” approach

Pull it all together:

- 1 Direct and Clear Subject
- 2 Let them know that you’re reaching out to all relevant reps, put them on notice!
- 3 “We see what you’ve been doing but we need to kick it up to the next level”
- 4 Identify what you believe the problem to be
- 5 A direct action request with an outcome, ask them to liaise with each other but keep you in the loop
- 6 A clear next step which links to the action. “Once we have x we’ll move onto y”

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Next Deadlines

A return may be submitted at any stage during a relevant period

- **21 January 2024** - Returns due for return period 1 September - 31 December 2023

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Questions?

Group Exercise

Group Exercise: Table Instructions

Each Room will need:

- A nominated note taker
- A nominated spokesperson
- An identified issue to advocate around

Pick one issue a room member is working on, research what elected Louth reps are saying on it (if anything).

Draft an email to a selected Louth rep/reps on the issue.

Each room will report back on the issue and the steps they would take to advocate on the topic with examples of research, e.g. seeing if the matter was raised in the Oireachtas, what the party manifesto says etc. and present their email.



ROCHTAIN

DEMOCRATISING ADVOCACY

sstgt

st.stephen's
green trust



Irish Council for
Civil Liberties

FOR ALL OUR RIGHTS. NO EXCEPTIONS.

Effective Political Communications

May 2025

ronan.kennedy@iccl.ie