



Comhairle Bhaile Chaislean a'Bharraí
Castlebar Town Council

16th December 2009

CASTLEBAR TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REVENUE BUDGET 2010

To the Mayor and Members of Castlebar Town Council,

INTRODUCTION

I hereby present to the Members of Castlebar Town Council this draft budget for the year ending 31st December 2010. The aim of this budget is to meet the requirements of Castlebar over the year by maintaining essential services whilst encouraging competitiveness and growth.

Due to the continued investment by Castlebar Town Council in infrastructure I am confident that Castlebar will be in a better position to meet the challenges posed by the current economic downturn than many other towns. These infrastructural investments require a major financial commitment from the Council both this year and in future budgets in order to ensure the continued sustainable development of Castlebar. By prudent expenditure now on infrastructure you are ensuring the future of Castlebar as a major centre for industrial, commercial and retail activity.

Capital Investment

We have many schemes under construction or at an advanced stage of planning. The capital programme will be dependent on the necessary resources being made available. With the contraction of Government spending many of the capital schemes will be dependent on internal Town Council resources for their completion. One notable prospect is the Military Barracks the purchase of which is currently at early stages of negotiation. This is a substantial strategic site. The acquisition of the Military Barracks has been an objective of the Council for many years. If the Council is successful in negotiating a deal funding will have to be put in place from the Council's own resources.

Comparing examples of our current capital programmed with this time last year indicates the real progress that has been made by this Council and the previous Council in relation to infrastructural provision.

PROJECT	2008	2009
59 house development at Saleen	Under construction	Completed
Lannagh/Newport Link Road	In planning	Contractor on site
Riverwalk	In planning	On site
Newline/Pontoon road/Rathbawn Rd. link	In planning	Junction improvement works underway
Main street Improvement Works	In planning	ERDF grant secured On site in January 2010
Playground at Saleen	In planning	Completed
Military Barracks		Under negotiation
Civic Offices	Land swap with Tennis club	Proposal being prepared for a public private partnership

REVENUE BUDGET 2010

BUDGET FORMAT 2010 The 2010 budget is presented in the new format as required by the Department of the Environment using activity based costing. **Activity-Based Costing (ABC)** is a costing model that identifies activities in an organization and assigns the cost of each activity resource to all products and services according to the actual consumption by each: it assigns overheads as direct costs of providing the service in this way an Local Authorities should be in a better position to establish the true cost of its individual products and services.

The budget is divided into programme group headings and contains information of the budget adopted in 2009, outturn for the year and the proposed budget for 2010. In accordance with section 103 of the Local Government Act 2001 the Members of a Local Authority are required to consider the draft budget and at the local authority budget meeting, by resolution, adopt the draft budget with or without amendment and determine the annual rate on valuation to be levied.

INCOME & EXPENDITURE Castlebar Town Council's revenue budget is funded primarily from three sources in the proportions indicated namely;

<i>Source of Income</i>	<i>2010</i>
Rates	54%
Local Government Fund /Grants	16%
Local Charges	30 %

The year ahead is projected to be a difficult one for traders in Castlebar. We have already seen an increase in the number of businesses closing down increasing the proportion of uncollectible rates. Whilst we are hoping that Castlebar won't experience a major contraction in the rates base in 2010 the buoyancy experienced in rates income over the past decade has halted.

In light of the above any income will have to come from savings in expenditure, rates and charges for services provided by Castlebar Town Council.

This budget targets areas for maximum benefit to the business community; For example I have increased the provision for the promotion and marketing of Castlebar as a business and tourist town. I have allocated a sum of €30,000 for a town centre shop front grants scheme in conjunction with the town centre redevelopment works refurbishment. A figure of €100,000 has been included for improvements to strategic footpaths and laneways around town. I envisage that this would be part of a 5 year improvement programme.

Whilst we aim to continue to expand services and improve facilities by continuing our ambitious capital programme of works and infrastructural provision we will have to be realistic with regard to our revenue spending in light of reduced revenues available to Castlebar Town Council in 2010 . I am conscious of the difficulties currently being experienced by our ratepayers and consequently I'm seeking no increase in the annual rate in valuation for 2010.

The completion of the planned maintenance programme will benefit our Local Authority Tenants and improve the quality of our housing stock. We will continue to progress the provision of amenities throughout the town. As part of the social housing investment programme and through casual vacancies Castlebar Town Council provided homes for over 40 families in 2009.

PROGRAMME GROUPS

Housing & Building.....Division A

SALEEN HOUSING SCHEME The Saleen housing scheme was finished in July 2009 and the 39 social houses were allocated and occupied shortly after. It is intended that the 20 additional units will be leased to Cluid housing association under the social housing leasing initiative.



PLANNED MAINTENANCE In late 2008 Castlebar Town Council tendered a planned maintenance contract for its oldest housing stock. This scheme commenced in 2009 and is funded from capital funds (internal receipts) received from the sale of local authority houses. On completion of the planned maintenance there should be a reduction in the need for miscellaneous housing maintenance.

HOUSING GRANTS Three new housing grants came into operation in 2007.

- *The Mobility Aids Grant* is available to fund works to address mobility problems
- *The Housing Adaptation Grant for People with a Disability* is intended to assist with works that are necessary to make a house suitable for persons with a disability
- *Housing Aid for Older People* is a grant to assist older people living in poor housing conditions with repairs and improvements

The grants are funded on an 80:20 basis between the Department of the Environment and Castlebar Town Council. I have provided for expenditure of €200,000 over all grants, however, actual spend in 2010 will be dependent on the department's allocation.

Road Transportation & Safety.....Division B

ROAD WORKS PROGRAMME Under this programme Castlebar Town Council agreed an extensive programme of works in 2009 including those listed below. The programme was funded by way Town Council own funds, a Block Grant of €108,000 and Special Block Grant for Carriageway and Footpath Repairs €69,000

ROAD WORKS ESTIMATES 2009

Location	Description	€
Rathbawn Road	Road Surfacing	15,000
Churchview Villas	Footpaths	10,000
Garryduff Drive	Footpaths	10,000
Pound Road	Footpaths	6,000
Garryduff Park	Footpaths & Road Surfacing	7,000
Tucker Street	Road Surfacing	14,000
Turlough Road	Public Lighting	15,000
Riverdale Court/Knockthomas Drive	Footpaths	5,000
Old Moneen Road	Footpaths	7,000
Cherrington Place	Footpaths & Public Lighting	12,000
Windy Gap/Sion Hill	Footpaths & Road Surfacing	14,000
Lakeshore Drive	Footpaths	10,000
Chestnut Grove	Footpaths	8,000
Hopkins Road	Road Surfacing & Lighting	30,000
Knockaphunta	Footpaths	10,000
Rowan Drive	Footpaths	4,000
Lower Charles Street	Footpaths	5,000
Greenfield	Footpaths	6,000
Thomas Street	Road Surface	12,000

<i>General Maintenance</i>	<i>€120,000</i>
<i>Street Sweeper (replacement)</i>	<i>€25,000</i>
<i>ESB Upgrade Lighting</i>	<i>€25,000</i>
<i>Improvements to Facilitate Disabled</i>	<i>€10,000</i>
<i>Traffic Calming Springfield</i>	<i>€20,000</i>

<i>Works to improve Open space/Greenspace</i>	<i>€30,000</i>
<i>Pedestrian crossing facilities</i>	<i>€50,000</i>
<i>Safety Signage/Road Markings</i>	<i>€10,000</i>



PARKING The management and maintenance of the car parks and the pay and display is provided for under this programme group. During the budgetary process last year we had envisaged that the Dunnes/Tesco/Cavendish Lane agreement would be renegotiated early in 2009. However, negotiations were not concluded as early so the outturns are at variance with the budget. The expectation is that Castlebar Town Council will regain control of its own car park on Hopkins road. This change is reflected in the budgeted income & expenditure account.

As a result of the increase in on-street parking charges in 2009 we have maintained our income from car parking in 2009 despite a reduction in on street activity due to the downturn although we did not achieve the budgeted income over the year.

LANNAGH ROAD/NEWPORT ROAD LINK R311 This much needed road project has been in planning over a number of years and credit is due to the members for their foresight and tenacity in bringing it to the construction stage. The contract was awarded to Ward & Burke Construction and they are currently on site. The contract is expected to be complete in summer 2010.



NEWLINE/PONTOON RD. IMPROVEMENT WORKS Following the statutory public consultation process Castlebar Town Council agreed in part to the proposed works at Newline and associated areas. Mayo County Council is currently working on a revised junction layout in this area. Further funding will be required in 2010 to complete this project.

MAIN STREET REFURBISHMENT Castlebar Town Council has recognised the need to upgrade the streetscape of bridge street/market street area of Castlebar. A plan of was prepared in consultation with the stakeholders. ERDF funding was secured to part fund this project. The Council intends commencing the upgrading the streetscape with plantings and new paving in January 2010. In conjunction with the business owners and occupiers the traditional town centre can be improved by addressing shop front appearance and design, un-necessary signage and litter.

DISABLED & PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS Castlebar Town Council and Mayo County Council have picked key locations in Castlebar Town centre to develop disabled and pedestrian crossings. Works have commenced on this programme in 2009 and the programme will continue in 2010.

N5 BOHOLA-WESTPORT ROAD Following the adoption of a preferred route consultants were appointed in 2009 to bring this road project to Compulsory Purchase Order and EIS stage by early next year

WATER & SEWERAGE.....DIVISION C

Castlebar Town Council is no longer responsible for the water services function in Castlebar as these functions have now been transferred to Mayo County Council. I have included a sum to recoup to Mayo County Council to cover the cost of water provision in the town.

CASTLEBAR WASTE WATER TREATMENT PLANT Veolia Water Ireland Ltd. Have taken over the operation of the old Castlebar treatment plant In 2009 pending completion of the new modern tertiary treatment plant at Knockthomas, Castlebar which is expected to be commissioned before the end of 2010

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT..... DIVISION D

TAKE OVER OF ESTATES The Members of the Council adopted a policy for take over of estates in 2009. Take over of the following estates was progressed in 2009:

- Fortlands
- Glencarra
- Whitehorse land
- Pound Grove and
- Wheatfield advertised for take over

This take over programme will continue in 2010.

Castlebar Town Council will endeavour to provide assistance to residents associations towards the maintenance of their estates. This will be crucial in the future as the number of estates taken over increases in a climate of reduced resources.

A comprehensive assessment of estates was undertaken by Castlebar Town Council in 2009. The Council has identified take over of estates as a priority. In light of this I propose an initial sum of €150,000 to target the most essential works . It is acknowledged that considerable further investment over the next number of years will be required to make proper progress in this area .

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION.....DIVISION E

STREET SWEEPING The street cleaning function is a responsible for a large part of Castlebar Town Council's expenditure budget. In light of the reductions in income we reviewed expenditure in this area and had to eliminate paid week end overtime. I wish to record my appreciation to the staff of the Council who have co-operated with this change. Castlebar Town Council took delivery of a streetsweeping vehicle in 2009. This replaces the machine hired from Mayo County Council. It is driven by staff of Castlebar Town Council.

TIDY TOWNS Castlebar Town Council commissioned a report from a Tidy Towns Adjudicator. This was presented to the Members, Tidy Towns Committee and other interested parties in late November 2008. The strategies suggested in the report will inform our future efforts to improve our position in the tidy towns competition. It will require Castlebar Tidy Towns Committee and Castlebar Town Council to involve all organisations in a drive for significant improvement.

Castlebar had success in the 2009 Tidy Towns competition having been presented with the architectural award in respect of "New Look" infill development and plaza at Hopkins road. Castlebar Town Council facilitated the high quality finish by allowing the construction of an attractive public plaza area to the front of the building on Council owned lands.



RECREATION AND AMENITY..... DIVISION F

Castlebar Town Council is constantly striving to improve facilities to improve life quality for the people of Castlebar. To this end Castlebar Town Council has a number of projects at various stages of planning and construction.

PLAYGROUNDS The Castlebar Town Council provided state of the art playground continues to be a very popular facility in an attractive and convenient location. An additional playground was provided as part of the new Saleen housing estate and a further playground is under construction by Mayo County Council at Knockthomas. A major amenity area is currently being planned at The Fairgreen.



RIVERWALK Work has commenced on the Castlebar Town Council commissioned plan to construct a river walk that will traverse the town. The plan provides for a comprehensive upgrade of lands adjacent to the riverbank to allow for an uninterrupted walkway from Lough Lannagh to Knockthomas. Works have started on site for the riverwalk project. Much of the work is being carried out by Castlebar Town Council directly. The first phase of the work is underway at Lough Lannagh and a contractor has been appointed to carry out site investigation works in relation to the pedestrian bridge. Funding to carry out these works will have to come from Castlebar Town Council and in this regard Castlebar Town Council has been making provision over a number of years for his project. This provision will have to continue into the future to ensure the completion of the project.

NEW AMENITIES Castlebar Town Council has a number of new exciting projects in planning. These include an amenity park at the **Fairgreen** incorporating sporting facilities and children's playground. This project will be funded from internal receipts from the sale of local authority dwellings. Facilities in Castlebar were boosted by the construction of a new Muga pitch in 2009 at Lough Lannagh near the children's playground.

TENNIS CLUB The new tennis club at Lough Lannagh was completed in 2009. This project was facilitated by Castlebar Town Council for which an exchange of lands was agreed.

FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS/PROJECTS Castlebar Town Council has been very generous over the term of the Council in providing financial support for community groups. Given the changed economic climate and having regard to other demands on the finances of the Council I have included a reduced amount in the budget for amenity grants in 2010. In addition I have provided for commitments already made in this area namely a sum of €7,500 for the F.A.I. Officer and €50,000 for Christmas lights.

APPRECIATION

We are fortunate to have an excellent team in the staff and Members of Castlebar Town Council. I would like to express my appreciation to the Town Clerk, Town Engineer and staff for their excellent work on behalf of the Council over the year. I would also like to acknowledge and thank the Mayor and the Members of Castlebar Town Council for their professionalism and commitment to Castlebar. The people of Castlebar are fortunate to have such a progressive Council working on their behalf for the betterment of Castlebar.

Seamus Granahan,

Manager of Castlebar Town Council