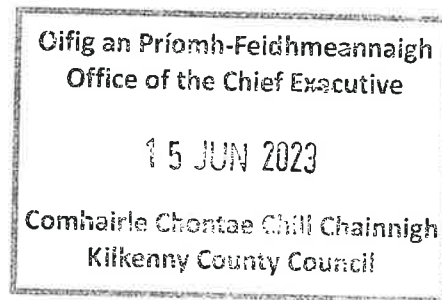




Ms Anne Maria Walsh
Meetings Administrator
Corporate Services Department
Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street
Kilkenny
R95 A39T



Our Ref: DRCD-MO-00257-2023

9th June 2023

Dear Ms Walsh,

Thank you for your correspondence received on 06 June 2023 in relation to the Local Improvement Scheme.

The Local Improvement Scheme (LIS) supports the improvement of rural roads and laneways that are not normally maintained by local authorities. As part of Our Rural Future, the Government is committed to ensuring that the LIS is funded into the future.

The Scheme was reintroduced by the Department of Rural and Community Development in 2017 following a number of years with no dedicated funding. The Department is committed to improving connectivity for rural and island residents, whether it be access to homes, farms or outdoor amenities. Since 2017, the Department has allocated almost €114 million to the scheme. Up to 2022, this has seen upgrade works on over 3,700 non-public roads and lanes benefiting over 16,000 landowners and residents in these rural areas.



Between 2017 and 2022, over €3.2 million was provided to County Kilkenny, which has resulted in improvement works taking place on 78 roads benefitting landowners and residents in these rural areas. This year, €361,156 has been allocated to Kilkenny for improvement works. This brings the total allocation to County Kilkenny since 2017 to just over €3.6 million.

As a result of a resolution passed at a recent meeting of Kilkenny County Council, we note your request for a substantial increase in funding in order to clear a backlog of applications received for the Local Improvement Scheme.

We take this opportunity to advise that information received on 31 May 2023 to the Department of Rural and Community Development advises of approximately 28 roads on hand. Furthermore, we note that should funding of approximately €400,000 become available, there is a capacity to complete works on 5 roads.

The scheme was launched 7 weeks earlier this year compared to 2022 and this early announcement of the 2023 allocations will help local authorities to complete works over the course of the year.

Should additional funding materialise, this department may shortly be in a position to indicate a second allocation amount for Kilkenny County Council.

Le gach dea-ghuí,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P? Tony Ely', is written over a horizontal line.

Barra Ó Nualláin
Private Secretary to Heather Humphreys TD
Minister for Rural and Community Development