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Limerick County Council To Freeze Commercial Rates

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Announcing details of the local authority's Draft Budget for 2008, Mr. Ned Gleeson, Limerick County Manager, confirmed that the decision would ensure Limerick remains an attractive location for new and existing investment.

Addressing the Limerick County Council's Budget 2008 meeting at County Hall, Mr. Gleeson said, "The commercial valuation of County Limerick continues to increase and the 2008 valuation shows an increase of over 4% on the 2007 figure. In drafting the Budget, I was acutely aware of the very competitive environment in which businesses currently operate and, so to ensure that Limerick continues to be an attractive location for new and existing investment, I do not propose to increase the commercial rate for 2008."

Mr. Gleeson pointed out that the current annual rate on valuation for County Limerick is one of the lowest of the thirty-four County and City Authorities in the country.

The total estimated expenditure included in the Council's Draft Budget for 2008 amounts to EUR126,584,064, an increase of EUR8,616,757 (7.30%) over the adopted figure for 2007. This level of expenditure will be financed from the Grants chr(38) Subsidies (30.54%), Goods chr(38) Services (26.73%), Local Government Fund Grant (21.44%) and Commercial Rates (21.29%).

Commenting on the Council's Budget, Cllr. Kevin Sheahan, Cathaoirleach of Limerick County Council, said he was delighted that it had moved to address many of the primary concerns of elected representatives.

He explained, "Particular mention should be given to those announcements that will have a positive effect on the day-to-day lives of the people of Limerick. They include commitments to introduce energy efficient enhanced public lighting in the county's towns and villages, as well as improved traffic calming measures and a revised road signage programme."

The traffic calming measures and road signage programme will be implemented over a number of years and will be financed from a combination of the Council's own resources, N.R.A. funding for National Roads, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government funding for Regional Roads, and the Development Fund.

Meanwhile, improvements to the county's public lighting system will form part of a structured work programme, to be undertaken over a number of years. Limerick County Council has committed EUR100,000 in the 2008 Draft Budget, which will be supplemented with an allocation from the Development Fund. Full details of the programme, along with next year's Road Works Scheme, will be presented to the Council's Elected Members in early 2008.

Cllr. Sheahan commented that 2007 had been a very positive year for Limerick County Council with the advancement of numerous significant infrastructural projects.

"The upgrading of County Limerick's infrastructure is a testament to the local authority's commitment to improve services. I look forward to the commencement of new projects and the completion of existing projects in 2008," concluded the Cathaoirleach.

Construction work on the Tunnel Project and the N7 High Quality Dual Carriageway continued in 2007, and these projects are scheduled for completion in 2010 and 2009 respectively. Phase two of the County Hall development at

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Lissanalta House as well as Rathkeale Area Office and Library (Áras Sean Finn) were completed and occupied during the year.

Meanwhile, the signing recently took place of a contract for the provision of a new Neighbourhood Park at Castletroy. The 17-acre park and amenity area is due for completion by mid-2008 and represents phase 1 of a programme of such parks for the City Environs and County.

Additional landfill capacity was also added at Gortadroma Landfill during the year, and other significant projects in the water/waste water, housing, fire and corporate building programme were advanced through the planning and procurement process.

Elsewhere, construction work recently started on the Revenue Office in Newcastle West, on a site provided by Limerick County Council. It is anticipated that the development will provide a welcome boost to the economy of Newcastle West.

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