

Quality Assurance – In Depth Check

Section A: Introduction

This introductory section details the headline information on the operation of the Arts Programme in County Kilkenny.

Programme or Project Information	
Name	Operation of the Arts Programme
Detail	Kilkenny County Council's Arts Programme works to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and to ensure a successful and thriving arts environment
Responsible Body	Kilkenny County Council
Current Status	Revenue expenditure being incurred annually
Start Date	Ongoing Annual Budget
End Date	Ongoing Annual Budget
Overall Cost	€955,046 for 2022

Programme Description

The operation of the Arts Programme is managed by the Arts Section of Kilkenny County Council. The total expenditure for the service in 2022 was €955,046. The Arts Office is part of the Cultural Services Section of Kilkenny County Council – Creating and Sustaining Great Communities and Places.

The core purpose of the Arts Programme is to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and to ensure a successful and thriving arts environment. The Arts Office works to develop, co-ordinate, motivate, inspire and strengthen artistic activity throughout the City and County. Kilkenny County Council promotes the arts as a worthwhile activity for all. It coordinates key cultural events and provides advice and support for groups and individuals.

Kilkenny County Council's Cultural Strategy Arts, Heritage and Libraries 2018 – 2022 is an integrated strategic plan which includes the delivery of the Arts Programme.

Kilkenny County Council has a framework agreement in place with the Arts Council. The purpose of this agreement is to highlight the shared strategic priorities for arts development in Kilkenny over the period 2019-2026. The framework outlines a shared vision for a new era of arts development, striving for equality of access to and engagement in the arts by all those living in Kilkenny.

Kilkenny City and County has an extensive, illustrious and spirited tradition within the arts, with a rich and varied cultural and craft heritage combined with an abundance of festivals. The Arts continue to be a significant ingredient in Kilkenny largely contributing to the progression of the social, cultural, creative, economic, and political future of Kilkenny. The Arts are an integral part of the cultural, tourism and economic development of the City and County.

2022	
Expenditure - Operation of Arts Programme	
Description	€
Payroll	137,448
Miscellaneous	143,052
Arts Office Programme	124,003
Contributions to other Bodies	453,001
Overhead Allocation	97,542
Total	955,046

Section B - Step 1: Logic Model Mapping

As part of this In-Depth Check, Kilkenny County Council's Internal Audit Unit have completed a Programme Logic Model (PLM) for the operation of the Arts Programme. A PLM is a standard evaluation tool and further information on their nature is available in the [Public Spending Code](#).

Objectives	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes
Kilkenny County Council's Arts Programme core objective is to develop, co-ordinate, motivate, inspire and strengthen artistic activity throughout the City and County.	Budget of €955k in 2022.	Literature, Music and Per Cent for Art Programmes.	The design and delivery of diverse programming and services for artists and communities across art forms.	The Arts Programme works to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and to ensure a successful and thriving arts environment.
	Arts Council Funding of €71,000.	Practitioner Professional Development	Manages community and educational programmes.	Provides for the development and implementation of an Arts Policy to increase artists knowledge and professional skills, and increase their future opportunities for employment in the Arts.
	2 staff members	Visual Arts – Emerging Curator Development Programme & Visual Arts mentoring.	Provides funding to festivals and infrastructure.	Increased awareness of art events for diverse communities.
	Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy Arts, Heritage & Libraries.	Provides advice and support to groups and individuals.	Co-ordinates key cultural events.	Improved access to the arts for people with different levels of arts experience and socio-economic backgrounds.
	Strategic Priorities contained in the Framework Agreement with the Arts Council.	Provides community, education and life-long learning initiatives.		
		Engages with young people via the Youth Arts Network.		
		Administers artists grants and bursaries		

Description of Programme Logic Model

Objectives:

Kilkenny County Council's Arts Programme core objective is to develop, co-ordinate, motivate, inspire and strengthen artistic activity throughout the City and County.

Inputs:

The Arts Programme has a budget of €955,046 including Arts Council funding of €71,000. Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy is an integrated strategic plan for the delivery of Arts, Heritage and Library Services in the Council. Kilkenny County Council has a framework agreement in place with the Arts Council. The purpose of this agreement is to highlight the shared strategic priorities for arts development in Kilkenny over the period 2016-2025.

Activities:

Kilkenny County Councils Art Programme delivers an extensive range of high quality Arts Programming and services which are community focused and cross-sectorial. They promote the arts as a worthwhile activity for all, coordinate key cultural events and provide advice and support for groups and individuals.

Outputs:

The Arts Programme provides easy access to high quality, innovative, exciting, challenging and engaging programmes for existing and new communities and practitioners, ensuring that the arts are woven into the fabric of daily life.

Outcomes:

The Arts Programme works to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as a centre of excellence for the arts and to ensure a successful and thriving arts environment.

Section B - Step 2: Summary Timeline of Project/Programme

The following section tracks the operation of Kilkenny County Council Arts Programme.

2022 The Arts Programme is an ongoing service provided by Kilkenny County Council. Funding for providing the service is included in the Annual Budget in the amount of €955,046. The Arts Programme includes professional development for artists across art forms, community arts programming, programmes ensuring engagement in the arts with and for young people, national day of culture and creativity and providing grants and bursaries.

Section B - Step 3: Analysis of Key Documents

The following section reviews the key documentation relating to appraisal, analysis and operation of Kilkenny County Council Arts Programme.

Project/Programme Key Documents	
Title	Details
Kilkenny County Council Annual Budget 2022	The budget allocation for the operation of the Arts Programme
Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy Arts, Heritage and Libraries 2018-2022	The Strategy is an integrated approach to cultural services and cultural management in Kilkenny County Council
Framework Agreement with the Arts Council	Details the shared strategic priorities for arts development in Kilkenny
Clár Éire Ildánach - Creative Ireland Programme 2017—2022	Creative Ireland is a culture-based programme designed to promote individual, community and national wellbeing
Kilkenny County Council Service Delivery Plan 2022	Identifies the services that Kilkenny County Council are proposing to deliver in 2022
Agresso Financial Management System	Financial details on the expenditure and income for the operation of the Arts Programme

Key Document 1: Kilkenny County Council Adopted Budget 2022

‘Kilkenny County Council’s Adopted Budget 2022’ details the expenditure and expected income for all service areas including the operation of the Arts Programme for 2022.

Key Document 2: Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy Arts, Heritage and Libraries

The Strategy presents an integrated approach to cultural services and cultural management in Kilkenny County Council. It replaces separate plans for Arts, Heritage and Libraries services.

Key Document 3: Framework agreement with the Arts Council

Kilkenny County Council has a framework agreement in place with the Arts Council. The purpose of this agreement is to highlight the shared strategic priorities for arts development in Kilkenny over the period 2019-2026.

Key Document 4: Clár Éire Ildánach - Creative Ireland Programme 2017—2022

The Creative Ireland Programme a government initiative committed to enhancing access to,

engagement with and enjoyment of Ireland’s culture and creativity.

Key Document 5: Kilkenny County Council Service Delivery Plan 2022

This plan identifies the services that Kilkenny County Council propose to deliver to the public in 2022.

Key Document 6: Agresso - Financial Management System

Reports can be generated from Agresso detailing the level of expenditure across the Arts Programme. It includes payroll costs, miscellaneous costs, arts office programme, contributions to other bodies and overhead allocations. This allows management to monitor budget adherence during the year.

Section B - Step 4: Data Audit

The following section details the data audit that was carried out for the operation of Kilkenny County Council Arts Programme. It evaluates whether appropriate data is available for the future evaluation of the Programme.

Data Required	Use	Availability
Financial Reports	To ensure adherence with budget	Yes
Procurement data for purchasing	To ensure compliance with procurement procedures	Yes
Metrics collated on: Number of young people that engaged with the Service Number of grants & bursaries awarded Number of artists & creators that engaged with the service Number of service user’s engagement	The metrics reflect engagement with service users and allows for Management to monitor, evaluate and adjust the operation of the service if needed	Yes

Data Availability and Proposed Next Steps

The necessary data is available to evaluate the operation of Kilkenny County Council Arts Programme. The availability of detailed statistics allows Management to ensure optimal operation of the Arts Programme. Over 42,000 people engaged with Kilkenny Arts Office in 2022.

Agresso (Financial Management System) gives Management up to date financial information to allow for ongoing budget monitoring and to ensure adherence to the Annual Budget. A sample of Purchase Orders and Low Value Purchase Card transactions were reviewed to ensure compliance with procurement procedures and all were found to be compliant.

Kilkenny's Arts Programme is part of the Directorate of Housing, Social, Community and Cultural Services in Kilkenny County Council. The Arts Programme report to the Strategic Policy Committee for Planning and Development, Heritage, Community, Arts and Culture. Regular reports on the operation of the Arts Programme are presented to Management in Kilkenny County Council.

Section B - Step 5: Key Evaluation Questions

The following section looks at the key evaluation questions for the operation of Kilkenny County Council's Arts Programme based on the findings from the previous sections of this report.

Does the delivery of the project/programme comply with the standards set out in the Public Spending Code? (Appraisal Stage, Implementation Stage and Post-Implementation Stage)

The operation of the Arts Programme broadly complies with the standards set out in The Public Spending Code. Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy forms the basis for the work of the Arts, Heritage and Libraries services for the period 2018-2022. The Arts Programme drafts a Work Programme/Service Delivery Plan on an annual basis, based on the contents of the Kilkenny County Council Cultural Strategy. Once the Annual Budget is confirmed, the Work Programme/Service Delivery Plan is determined providing further details on projects proposed, the project partners, timeframes, individuals and organisations responsible for delivery. This Service Delivery Plan is adopted by the Elected Members each year.

Is the necessary data and information available such that the project/programme can be subjected to a full evaluation at a later date?

The necessary data is available to allow for a full evaluation if required.

What improvements are recommended such that future processes and management are enhanced?

Kilkenny County Council's Arts Programme works to further strengthen Kilkenny's position as

a centre of excellence for the arts and to ensure a successful and thriving arts environment in the City and County. In order for the delivery of the strategies outlined in Clár Éire Ildánach - Creative Ireland Programme – Culture & Creativity Strategy 2023-2027 for Kilkenny, it is essential that Kilkenny County Council continue to provide adequate funding and the required level of staffing to enable the Creative Arts Community to deliver on strategic priorities for the Council for 2023-2027.

Section: In-Depth Check Summary

The following section presents a summary of the findings of this In-Depth Check on the operation of Arts Programme in County Kilkenny.

Summary of In-Depth Check

Overall, I find the operation of the Arts Programme in County Kilkenny complies with the broad principles of the Public Spending Code.

Kilkenny County Council operate an Arts Programme that is committed to supporting continuous engagement with the Arts. It is beneficial for building creative capacities and enhancing wellbeing. Music, visual art and poetry contribute to societal creativity in such a way as to stimulate learning, good health and social cohesion, as well as job creation and economic prosperity.