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EDITOR'S COMMENT

With Budget 2012 looming, we can expect a raft of further austere measures and cuts across all sectors....€3.6 billion to be exact or will this package of cuts go even higher as predicted by Finance Minister Michael Noonan in recent times. Perhaps

However, the Government's partner is against additional budget cuts and taxes higher than the €3.6bn mark....such differing views between Fine Gael and Labour are quite disconcerting for the general public who are facing enough doom and gloom without having the Coalition partners locking horns over final figures.

The recent news that the Government is shelving a number of important and vital transport motorway and rail projects, such as the Metro North and the Navan Rail Link to name but a few, has been met with justifiable criticism. It's not so long ago that promises were made by both parties as part of their election mandates, but how quickly mandates change over time when power changes hands.

Cuts at local government level are also set to shake up the structures for both city and county councils, where significant rationalisation is on the horizon. The Local Government Efficiency Review Group has identified savings of €511 million to be achieved through efficiencies across the local authority system. While some progress has been made, more is needed.

Ireland currently has 34 county and city councils, which is equivalent to one per 134,743 people, whereas one council per 250,000 people would result in 18 councils, which has estimated to generate savings of more than €1 billion.

For example, the proposals for Limerick and Tipperary provide a template for what is possible; by merging Limerick city and county councils and South and North County Councils to create one local authority in each county.

So, perhaps are these two mergers a sign of far few local authorities in the future?

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5 NEWS UPDATE

20 PUBLIC SECTOR EFFICIENCY

'Council Review' is media partner of the inaugural Public Sector Finance & Efficiency Summit on 22 November at Croke Park Conference Centre, Dublin.

23 WORLD DESIGN CAPITAL

Dublin's four local authorities now plan to implement the 'Pivot Dublin' bid, which narrowly lost out to Cape Town, winner of World Design Capital 2014.

27 WASTE COLLECTION

Dublin City Council is losing millions on domestic and commercial waste collection service and is now advancing plans to privatise it in the New Year. However, with opposition from unions and councillors are there any alternatives? How can a private company make it profitable?

33 FIRE SAFETY CERTIFICATION

Lack of fire safety materials and controls in Dublin's Priory Hall in Donaghmede and Áras na Cluaine apartment blocks in Clondalkin are only the start of what will be "dynamite", according to a senior surveyor.

39 ENGINEERS IRELAND

With the education system in a state of crisis and threatening the country's economic recovery, the President of Engineers Ireland PJ Rudden claims urgent attention is needed to re-align second and third level curricula with the skills requirements of the economy.

50 MUSIC GENERATION

Up to €1.6 million has been awarded to local authorities in Louth, Mayo and Sligo under a new music education partnership to give children and young people in these counties a greater access to vocal and instrumental tuition over the next three years.

56 AMAI CONFERENCE REPORT

Local authorities and councillors have a major role to play in the tourism industry, which can spur economic regeneration and job creation in areas across the country, delegates at the AMAI annual conference were told.

65 SMARTER TRAVEL

With local authorities in Dublin, Galway and Waterford and Cork now signed up to the Smarter Travel Workplaces programme, the National Transport Authority is keen to work with other local authorities.

77 SUSTAINABLE ENERGY AUTHORITY

Ireland has the opportunity to take a long-term strategic view of environmental policy, with huge potential to create sustainable jobs across the green sector, according to Dr Brian Motherway, SEAI's chief operations officer.



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81 SOCIAL HOUSING CONFERENCE

Many NAMA-linked houses and apartments around the country are not suitable for social housing use due to their type and location, NAMA's chief executive told delegates at the Irish Council for Social Housing conference in Galway in September.

86 ARCHITECTURE AWARDS

Local authorities must take a more realistic view of planning projections and local demographics in the future, in light of the latest census figures that showed a growth in Ireland's population, claims John Graby, director of the RIAI.

102 CHALLENGING RACISM

Local authorities, community organisations and residents' groups need to work together to support victims of racism and challenge racially motivated anti-social behaviour, according to the Immigrant Council of Ireland.

109 WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL

Creating a one-stop shop solution and receiving international recognition, the construction of the Wexford County Council offices at Carricklawn in Wexford represents a huge triumph for the local authority.

113 WATERFORD CITY COUNCIL

Waterford City benefitted hugely under the Celtic Tiger era from an infrastructural and social investment point of view. The challenge is to maintain that development and to build a place where people continue to want to live, work and visit, says city manager Michael Walsh.

116 MONAGHAN COUNTY COUNCIL

As county councils throughout the country develop strategies in the current economic environment, collaboration and partnership are vital for success, according to David Fallon, acting county manager with Monaghan County Council.

126 CORK CHAMBER

Cork Chamber of Commerce says the "opportunistic introduction of tolls" on the Jack Lynch Tunnel would penalise 68,000 drivers every day and cause congestion chaos throughout the city and its suburbs.

134 COMMUNITY POLICING

Assistant Commissioner Michael Feehan says that the Gardaí are working in close partnership with Dublin City Council and the local communities in a bid to combat anti-social behaviour in the inner city.

141 SOUTH TIPPERARY COUNTY COUNCIL

The Government's decision to merge North and South Tipperary County Councils received heavy criticism by councillors in South Tipperary while acting manager Billy McEvoy was disappointed the way the announcement was handled.

151 CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

Carlow county manager Tom Barry believes all the fundamentals are right in the county for successful business, economic and industrial growth.



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