**Lough Funshinagh Update 02 April 2024**

Roscommon County Council is actively addressing the challenges posed by the rising water levels at three separate locations around the lake as well as a number of related locations in the general catchment.

1. The situation at the northern end of the lake is the most critical at this point in time; three houses have floor levels below the level of the lake and are only protected by temporary measures, sand bags and round the clock pumping. The floor level of a fourth house at this location is approximately 30mm above the lake level. Local primary L2005 has been closed for several weeks at this location causing social isolation and land access difficulties for local farmers.
2. A second location at the north-eastern end of the lake is equally critical. One house has a floor level below the lake level and is only protected by temporary measures, sand bags and round the clock pumping. The local tertiary road (L20051) providing access to this house and a second house on this road is now flooded and effectively closed; however, desperate temporary measures have managed to maintain emergency access for residents and flood defence efforts.
3. Local secondary L7731 has been closed for several weeks at a third location at the south end of the lake. Two additional properties at this location (one occupied and one vacant) are close to being flooded and have flooded septic tanks. A second nearby local secondary road (L7621) is also flooded and closed and further related flooding is imminent on the R362 near Carrick, Curraghboy.

The Local Authority is making every effort to defend the affected properties with the assistance of pumps provided by the OPW; however, existing defences are at and possibly beyond their limit. With further rain forecast over the coming days and week, levels are expected to increase marginally in April before they level out or begin to reduce in May (assuming drier conditions prevail in April-May).

The water level in Lough Funshinagh has reached an unprecedented high of 69.290m, surpassing previous records set in 2016 and 2021 by over 1000mm and 260mm respectively. Geological Services of Ireland predicted this alarming trend and highlighted concerns in court proceedings in 2021. The trend appears set to continue year on year and shows no signs of reversing. **Without intervention, it is anticipated that four houses will be permanently lost to the lake in 2024/25.**

The immediate and temporary solution is to implement a controlled water removal strategy, diverting excess water from the lake into an adjacent catchment area (the Shannon catchment in this case). The pipeline initiated in 2021 provides a readily available and direct route for this purpose; however, Roscommon County Council does not have legal authority to avail of this option.

While Roscommon County Council continues to work through the statutory planning requirements associated with an acceptable long-term solution, it fears that without government intervention at this critical juncture, all will be lost before this solution can be delivered.