

Declaration of the college of aldermen

After six years of political responsibility, we have been able to plan and implement important points from the Board of Aldermen's declaration for the 2017-2023 legislative period. Around 90% of the aims have been addressed, analysed, and in large part realised. It has been possible to achieve all this work despite a pandemic which needed to be managed. Welcoming refugees from the war in Ukraine has been possible thanks to the compassion and commitment of our residents and of our local authority administration staff.

Major projects, such as the extensions to our primary school and the daycare centre, construction of a new sports hall and 22 affordable homes, along with the project to improve the Contern village centre have been set in motion during the last legislative period, and we are excited at being able to realise them as we continue the CSV-LSAP coalition.

The development of our municipality is important, but it should not happen to the detriment of nature, the environment, local farms, our quality of life or our health, or to the detriment of our children and future generations. We are living in a time of significant changes, with the climate crisis, the housing shortage, a healthcare system that is creaking at the seams, along with an unclear economic and financial situation and a present-day dominated by wars in Ukraine and Gaza, amongst many others. During these difficult times, it is important to be proactive in moving forward.

With plenty of determination, competence and good sense, we want to continue committing ourselves to working on behalf of our municipality, our four villages and all our residents, to represent their interests and to prepare our municipality for the future.

The issues which are particularly close to our hearts are:

Quality of life

Quality of life and ensuring that the four villages in our municipality live well together is something we are particularly committed to. The rural character and the setting in open country contribute notably to that, and the College of the Mayor and Aldermen is dedicated to:

- Continuing the upkeep and embellishment of our villages.
- Developing village centres with restricted speeds for vehicular traffic whilst putting an emphasis, amongst other things, on integration of green spaces and trees in the public realm.

- Measures to slow traffic speeds at the entrances to our villages are an absolute priority.
- After the redevelopment of the centre of Contern, improvement works in the centre of Moutfort will be started. As with the project in Contern, civic engagement is planned to enable residents to give their ideas and suggestions. In the same spirit, a plan for improving the built environment will be developed with residents for the villages of Oetrange and Medingen.
- The network of walking paths and pedestrian links will be developed, in order to facilitate getting around on foot locally and between the various villages.
- A soft mobility path will be realised between "Op Bricherpad" and Rue de Syren in Contern.
- Working with the CFL to find a new use for Oetrange station and a solution to the local parking situation for the station and the nearby businesses.
- In order to enable residents dealing with administrative matters to be served in an efficient and discreet manner, as well as to offer the space needed by an expanding administration, construction of a new town hall was set in motion during the last legislative period. The architecture competition for this project was presented to the public in summer 2023.
- The current town hall will be converted into a medical centre, and will be leased to doctor's practices and to the local pharmacy.
- A public park suitable for all ages will be realised in the centre of Contern. It will provide a link between the Route de Luxembourg and the SNHBM affordable homes development "An de Steng".
- In relation to the PAP Contern South 2 development, the play area has been relocated more to the north, and the plan is to develop a new park in connection with the Conter Stuff renovation project and the project for the future medical centre.

Safety

Road safety is one of the issues that is a particular concern for the College of the Mayor and Aldermen. Unfortunately, our villages are faced with high levels of traffic passing through. While the volume of this vehicular traffic can only be resolved at the national level, the College of the Mayor and Aldermen is proposing to invest in traffic-calming and in road safety by pulling the levers at several points:

- Progressive improvement of the village centres and converting them to 30kph zones.
- Working for a motorway link to resolve the traffic issues generated by the industrial area.
- Traffic-calming measures at the entrances to the villages (as are coming to the Rue de Medingen in

Moutfort and on the main road in Milbech) as an absolute priority.

- On a case-by-case basis, imposing speed restrictions on secondary roads by installing speed humps.
- Reducing motorised traffic at the local level by encouraging soft mobility. In that spirit, the College of the Mayor and Aldermen is committed to realising walking and cycling links at the local level between the various villages.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen is aware that realising these measures, like the roadworks to install utilities infrastructures, impact on use of the public space and on how residents get about. It is working constantly to ensure that works sites are managed as well as possible, and it regularly informs residents about progress and delays.

The local authority administration has initiated a status review of local roads, pavements and bus stops, in order to develop a maintenance and replacement plan which will be progressively executed.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen wants to continue the valuable collaboration with the police and to take prevention work forward together. In order to promote safety and prevent crime, it is proposed to install public lighting equipped with motion sensors and night vision cameras in strategic locations with respect to public facilities and parks.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen continues to work to acquire land for construction of a new CGDIS response centre, as the current centre is spread between several buildings in Moutfort.

Soft mobility and public transport

In order to promote soft mobility, Contern municipality is proposing:

- To realise pedestrian links at the local level and between the villages, notably by finalising the footpath between Moutfort and Contern.
- To complete the network of cycle paths in the local municipality area, and to work towards links to the national network, such as the cycle path towards Hesperange.
- To realise bike parking in relation to public buildings and spaces.
- To support European Mobility Week with the local authorities in Hesperange and Weiler-la-Tour, and to take part in the national Vëlosummer event.

With the aim of achieving optimum use of public transport by residents to get around, it is planned to continue initiatives with national bodies to optimise bus timetables and the servicing of the municipality by the national RGTR network.

Family, schools, youth and 3rd age

For the College of the Mayor and Aldermen, the well-being of children and young people, senior citizens and the family is paramount. Every citizen should be free to choose how they want to live. Our priority for the municipality is a diversified and multi-generational offering.

- The extension to the primary school and the Um Ewent daycare centre infrastructures is starting in 2024.
- Planning for the extension to add two rooms to the local authority crèche in Moutfort is underway.
- Bringing up to standard, maintaining and creating play areas for all ages (play, pétanque courts, and multi-sports pitches).
- Planning and offering a site for a skate park.
- Working on integrating and developing teenagers, in collaboration with the Youth Committee and the youth centre. The municipality will continue to promote sports, cultural and social activities aimed at and involving teenagers. Based on feedback on the ground, the Maison des jeunes concept will be regularly evaluated and adapted.
- Undertaking an evaluation of local authority buildings looking at their use for all the generations, and installing e.g. changing tables accessible to both parents
- Demographic change is a reality in Contern municipality today. In order to pursue a politics that listens to and takes account of older residents, the College of the Mayor and Aldermen – with the Committee of the Third Age – is continuing to offer activities targeted on them and to promote inter-generational dialogue.

Health, sport, culture and leisure

Sport and culture play an important role in social cohesion, contribute to personal education and development, support the integration of new residents, and encourage dialogue between the generations.

Many clubs and associations in our municipality, whether in the field of sport, culture, music or other leisure-time activities, have suffered considerably during the Covid pandemic. It is important to the College of the Mayor and Aldermen to continue to provide local authority support to them, in the interests of the wider community and of living together. The Sports Committee and the Culture Committee will continue to organise participative and recreational activities.

The collaboration with the regional tourist board (Office régional du tourisme, ORT) will be strengthened to develop projects such as creating themed and adapted walking paths.

The Comic Committee created especially for the Comic Festival will continue to work in collaboration with the College of the Mayor and Aldermen and to receive local authority support. The municipality council will continue to work with the Ministry of Culture to obtain official designation as “village de la BD” (“Village of the Comic”). Twinning with a municipality council abroad can then be considered.

The past of our villages, the history and the traditions of our region should not be forgotten. The municipality council continues to offer support to associations working to preserve the “collective memory” and makes venues available for possible exhibitions.

It is planned to:

- Continue logistical and financial support to sports and cultural associations and to encourage volunteering.
- Draw up an inventory of rooms made available to clubs and associations. The condition of venues is to be evaluated, with a view to renovating them and to creating new, adapted venues for theatre shows and concerts, as well as cultural and creative activities.
- Explore creating a community garden, in order to encourage social gardening and knowledge exchange.
- Continue developing multicultural and participative events, through activities such as concerts and festivals (National Day, Christmas market, Comic Festival, etc.)

Healthcare and local services related to it are a particular concern of the College of the Mayor and Aldermen. It is proposed to establish a medical centre in the current town hall, covering primary medical needs (paediatrics, physiotherapy, etc.), facilitating laboratory examinations and incorporating the Contern pharmacy.

Democracy, civic engagement and information policy

Civic engagement and information are the essence of a vibrant local authority, and the basis of community life.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen is committed to:

- Being available for and listening to residents.
- Continuing to organise information meetings about major projects and works.
- Continuing civic engagement via workshops for mobility projects and projects to improve the urban space.
- Promoting a policy of participation through collaboration with the municipality council's committees on issues, projects and events.
- Encouraging citizens to be involved in the consultative committees.
- Continuing the communication via digital media and the letterbox.

Living together and equal opportunities

Integration, inclusion and equal opportunities are the basis of living together, of social cohesion and of citizen well-being. In our municipality, everyone has a place and can pursue their interests, whilst respecting others.

The atmosphere of good neighbourliness and living together is fostered by:

- Civic engagement and being encouraged to share ideas.
- Implementation of the neighbourhood app Hoplr.
- Digital integration of citizens through the continued offer of courses on using contemporary media.
- Linguistic integration of citizens through the continued offer of courses in the Luxembourgish language.
- Promoting neighbourhood festivals by providing equipment (tables, benches and tents).

In order to promote the social and political engagement of young people, the College of the Mayor and Aldermen is proposing to lower the age of joining the Youth Committee to 16.

Together with experts, the municipality council administration is undertaking a review of the accessibility of its public buildings and roads. This ties in with the creation of public toilets for persons with reduced mobility in the various venues and in public parks.

The municipality will continue its financial support to the Conter Hëllef asbl association, for charitable assistance at the local, national and international level.

The municipality will continue to promote Fairtrade products at events organised by the local authority. The organisation of targeted actions will be continued with neighbouring authorities, e.g. the Fairtrade Café.

Energy and climate

As a Climate Pact partner, Contern municipality is committed to increasing and promoting the use of renewables within its area.

This goal is implemented in cooperation with residents, via grants given to residents:

- A grant for purchasing energy-efficient domestic white goods.
- A rainwater collector grant, on condition of receiving a similar grant from the State.
- A local authority grant for installations for rational use of energy and for exploiting renewable energy in the Contern municipality area, on condition of a grant being paid by the State.

The solar cadastre for Contern municipality can be consulted online and allows citizens to have an initial evaluation of whether their roof is suitable for solar panels.

The municipality council undertakes to improve the energy efficiency of current and future public facilities, and intends to:

- Work with experts to draw up an energy balance sheet for existing public buildings, and to evaluate possible energy improvements.
- Increase the energy self-sufficiency of local authority infrastructures through its building choices and by installing renewables in accordance with an integrative concept designed for the long term.
- Install PV panels on public and local authority buildings.
- Continue to mitigate light pollution by progressively converting public lighting to LED lights.

As part of saving resources, the College of the Mayor and Aldermen is continuing to:

- Engage the general public in combating food waste and in sorting waste. By introducing a new selective sorting system, Contern municipality has succeeded in considerably reducing the volume of domestic waste during the 2017-2023 legislative period.
- Make the municipality's residents aware of climate, nature, energy and resources issues through

articles in the Gemeengebuet publication and in the municipality's digital media. The municipality council will continue its collaboration with the SIAS member municipalities on targeted actions such as the Repair Café and on promoting re-use ("second-hand").

- Favour regional products and reusable crockery and cutlery for public events.

Environment, nature conservation and farming

The municipality has a duty to work to preserve the natural bases of life. The value of the natural and farmed landscape is decisive for the quality of life and the attractiveness of the municipality. The College of the Mayor and Aldermen is committed to responsible management of natural resources, and to applying the principle of "sustainability" in the municipality's various policy forums and projects. It is planned to:

- Launch the project to protect and re-nature the Syre, in tandem with anti-flood measures, while taking urban development into account and respecting the existing built fabric of the villages. This project has been developed in collaboration with the farmers concerned, and it will be realised with support from the Ministry of the Environment, Climate and Sustainable Development and the Water Management Authority.
- Continue to guarantee the quality of the drinking water from the springs, in collaboration with neighbouring authorities, state bodies and local farmers.
- Work on reducing CO2 emissions.
- Continue the sustainable management, as per the FSC label, of the 300 hectares of local authority forest, and continue to acquire forested areas.
- Implement the ten-year plan in collaboration with the Nature and Forest Agency (ANF) through adaptation measures to ensure the resilience of local authority and private forests.
- Flesh out the Nature Pact signed in 2022, in collaboration with the state bodies, the local authority syndicates and the local associations.
- Organise the annual Environment Week, via awareness-raising actions in collaboration with the local authorities in the SIAS.
- Work for biodiversity at village level via targeted projects, such as the perennials action and late mowing.
- Continue the tradition of planting hedges and trees for new-borns (Kannerbongert).
- Realise community gardens, facilitating knowledge exchange.

Farming continues to play an important role in the look of the villages and of the countryside of Contern municipality, and it holds a central place in food security for our society. Through targeted projects in collaboration with state bodies and farmers, the municipality council will continue to work for the use of working methods that respect the environment. The College of the Mayor and Aldermen continues to listen to local farmers.

Drinking water is a vital resource, and its rational

use is important throughout the year and across all seasons. The local authority is continuing to invest in the spring catchments and to provide for volumes of water to be reserved with the SEBES (Syndicat des eaux du barrage d'Esch-sur-Sûre) water authority, in order to ensure the volumes of drinking water needed for a growing demographic. A campaign to raise awareness amongst residents for the reasonable use of water is planned during the current legislative period, in collaboration with the three other local authorities who founded the SIAS. The price of drinking water and of sewage, which has not been adjusted since 2010, will be brought into line in accordance with the relevant regulation.

Contern municipality council is pursuing its commitment to the climate and nature within its area and regionally in collaboration with strategic partners and syndicates, such as Flusspartnerschaft Syr, "Klimabündnis" (Climate Alliance), the "regionaalt Klimatsteam", COPIL and SIAS. Together with SIAS, Contern municipality council runs the recycling centre, organises activities and undertakes targeted projects on the subject of climate, the circular economy, the environment, biodiversity and nature conservation, while SIDEEST is responsible for wastewater treatment. Policy is implemented in collaboration with the Environment Committee and the Climate Pact and Nature Pact working groups.

Finance and economy

The finances and the economic forecast for Contern municipality council will be based on medium- and long-term investments benefiting all citizens and respecting the environment. The College of the Mayor and Aldermen is concerned to ensure that income and expenditure sit within the existing legal framework and to communicate a transparent financial policy to residents.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen, responsible for drawing up the annual budget and the multi-year forecast, prepares them in close collaboration with the Contern municipality council administration and with input from a specialist economic consulting firm. The annual budget and the multi-year forecast are presented to the municipality council and the Finance Advisory Committee gives an opinion. After this, the annual budget is voted on in the municipality council.

Thanks to integrated management of the local authority finances over recent years and despite having to manage the Covid health crisis and the crisis generated by the war in Ukraine, the local authority currently has a sound economic base and the necessary room to manoeuvre to undertake the long-term investments required in the face of demographic trends: extensions to school and sports facilities, infrastructure and utilities works, traffic-calming measures and measures to promote soft mobility, and the creation of affordable homes, a new town hall, and meeting-places. The stability of the budget is based on sound planning: to a large extent, studies have been initiated and delivered during the 2017-2023 legislative period, enabling projects to

be realised during the 2023-2028 legislative period. At the end of 2023, the local authority's debt was €2,619 per resident. In order to be able to realise the projects set out here, the municipality council's debt will rise at the end of 2024 to a maximum of €7,000 per resident.

In this context, the collaboration with neighbouring authorities in the various projects and syndicates, along with the budgets allocated to them and the budget trends, will be verified and adjusted in consideration of the shared charges and depending on the projects developed. Calls for tenders through syndicates can often prove to be the most attractive approach economically.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen has set itself the targets of optimising administrative flows and procedures, along with adapting the staffing in the various departments in the local authority administration to future developments via training, recruitment in proportion to demographic growth, and depending on the tasks devolved to the local authorities by the government.

The College of the Mayor and Aldermen will continue to work to maintain and develop relations with the local economy.

Urban development, infrastructures and housing

The harmonious development of the municipality is pursued whilst respecting man and nature. A considered and integrative long-term approach is called for. The municipality has had a new PAG (general development plan) drawn up on these principles and approved by the respective Ministries since summer 2023. The next update to the PAG is planned in six years' time, under the legal framework.

During the past six years, the municipality has grown by 635 new residents, and at the start of 2023 it had 4,359 residents. It is possible to estimate future growth of around 1,376 residents in relation to the PAP (specific development plans) being realised and planned. With growth estimated at 38%, the population could reach close on 6,000 residents by 2028. Faced with this demographic growth, policy-makers have put on track several projects in relation to public facilities and the public realm:

- An extension to the primary school, the local authority crèche, the daycare centre and the sports complex.
- Renovation of the Conter Stuff, a distinctive and key building given its central location at the heart of Contern village.
- Investment in infrastructures in relation to drinking water and wastewater, as well as in utilities, matched to the growing demographic and technical advances.
- Redevelopment of the centre of Contern, with a speed-calmed zone for motorised traffic, along with the planting of trees and green spaces.
- Improvement of the village centre environments.
- Traffic-calming measures at the village entrances.
- Construction of a new town hall:
The current town hall was, from its inauguration in

2017, too small for the administration, which was permanently expanding due to the demographic trend and the growing tasks devolved to local authorities by the government. At the end of the last legislative period, the decision was taken by local authority policy-makers to build a new town hall and to develop the project on the basis of an architecture competition. The site chosen was in the centre of Contern, integrating the building of the old primary school, a distinctive building which enjoys protection as a local heritage asset. The aim is to construct a functional building by integrating the old school building and to complete the whole with a public square and plantings. As such, the project fits within the existing urban fabric and does not contribute to increasing the sealed surface in Contern village. The architecture competition was presented to the public at the start of summer 2023, and the municipality council announced the winning project based on a detailed evaluation of the competition.

In the near future, it is possible to foresee several other specific projects that are currently at the study stage:

- Transformation of the current town hall into a medical centre with a pharmacy on the ground floor.
- Construction of a path linking "Op der Haangels" and Rue de Syren in Contern.

In 2021, Contern municipality council signed the initial agreement of the "Pacte Logement 2.0" ("Housing Pact 2.0"). It is fulfilling its commitment by building two affordable rental housing projects, in the form of multi-family buildings in Rue de l'Eglise in Oetrange and in Route de Luxembourg in Contern. A third affordable rental housing project in Rue de Syren in Contern is at the study stage. The College of the Mayor and Aldermen, via the media, will provide regular updates on the progress of these projects and the criteria for allocating the housing, when the time comes. It undertakes to provide information on the benefits of social renting management for private owners.

Much has been realised and started in recent years, but much remains to be implemented. Realising the projects and aims set out in the College of the Mayor and Aldermen statement is possible thanks to the perseverance and dedication shown over the last six years. The basis of the work is maintaining good contact with our residents, our clubs and associations, with our fire service (CGDIS) and the police, with our farmers, and with the businesses based in our municipality, our enterprise zone and the people working there.

We are committed to working for a resilient municipality, prepared for the challenges of the future. It is important to us to plan with foresight and good sense, together with our citizens, and on the basis of a concept of development drawn up for the long-term.

