



CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

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14th December 2007

**Ms. Chris Gavigan & Mr. Matt Merrigan,
Joint Chairs,
LANPAG,
Local Government Management Services Board,
Olaf House,
35-37 Ushers Quay,
Dublin 8.**

Performance Verification under - Towards 2016 - June 2007 – February 2008

Dear Ms. Gavigan & Mr. Merrigan,

I refer to your correspondence of 31st October 2007 relating to the above, requesting a narrative report summarising the initiatives/actions which demonstrate progress for the period June 2007 – February 2008 in the Carlow Local Authorities. Enclosed please find completed checklist report for your attention.

The attached progress report clearly sets out the current position vis a viz progress achieved following consultation with the Workplace Partnership Committee. A meeting with the Partnership Committee took place on the 12th November 2007 to consider the draft progress reports and a further meeting in the last week to finalise the report.

The process of co-operation with Change, Modernisation and Flexibility is ongoing and I am satisfied that the measures and initiatives undertaken by Carlow Local Authorities have and will continue to positively impact on improving organisational performance, development of workforce skills and capability and the effective delivery of quality services to all our customers.

Overall Performance

Carlow Local Authorities have put in place and continue to put in place, measures to improve organisational performance and effectiveness through team working and cross functional working i.e. Major Emergency Planning Committee, Health & Safety Management Committee, Health & Safety Consultative Group, Integrated water metering implementation committee, Universal Access Working Group and other cross-functional teams.

Integration of the Human Resource Functions for Carlow County Council and Carlow Town Council has been completed.

DIRECT LINES: CODE 059

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|--------------------------|---------|
| Central Engineering Area | 9172486 |
| Muinebheag Area Engineer | 9721418 |
| Tullow Engineering Area | 9136272 |
| County Library | 9170094 |
| Fire Station | 9131144 |
| Motor Taxation | 9170342 |
| Driving Licence | 9170343 |

| | |
|--------------------------|---------|
| Planning | 9170307 |
| Housing | 9170368 |
| Waste & Environment | 9136230 |
| Roads | 9170379 |
| Water Services | 9136264 |
| County Development Board | 9170385 |
| Loan Payments | 9172489 |
| Rent Payments | 9172489 |

| | |
|-------------------------|---------|
| Human Resources | 9170387 |
| Information Technology | 9136215 |
| Community & Enterprise | 9136205 |
| Higher Education Grants | 9170314 |
| Rates | 9172487 |
| Register of Electors | 9170313 |
| Arts | 9136209 |

A comprehensive Strategic Training, Learning & Development Programme, in conjunction with the PMDS Process, is being developed which will support and encourage workforce skills and capability. In addition an evaluation programme of Training, Learning & Development will be initiated.

Policies on Attendance Management & Welfare Programme and Alcohol & Drugs have been rolled out to all our staff.

In the area of Information & Communication Technology a comprehensive plan is in place for Carlow Local Authorities which will provide the framework which is underpinning the Information Systems development in the organisation.

Carlow Local Authorities continue to measure their performance by benchmarking various services in respect of the 42 National Service Indicators.

Carlow Local Authorities were the overall winner in the award for Economic Development for the initiative and website relating to “ Click for Carlow ”in the 2007 Chambers Ireland Excellence in Local Government Awards. The authorities were also commended for two projects – Partnership with Business Award – Carlow Wi-Fi Network and Social and Community Award – New Oak Community Centre. In addition Carlow Local Authorities were one of six shortlisted for the Local Authority of the Year 2007 award.

In the area of value for money and effectiveness, the costing project will be completed by the end of February 2008. Discussions have commenced with the unions with regard to the rationalisation of the revenue collection service. With effect from January 2008 salaries for the Town and County Councils will be paid through one salary payments run. Preparation has commenced on a Corporate Procurement Plan for Carlow Local Authorities which will be completed by February, 2008. Elected Members have been nominated to the Audit Committee and external nominees have been agreed and the Committee will meet in early 2008.

I confirm that there has been full compliance with the Industrial Relations provisions of Towards 2016. With regard to the Modernisation/Change agenda the following have and will continue to play a key role in this success:

Improving Customer Service

BDO Simpson Xavier have been commissioned to carry out Mystery Shopper, which will be completed by 31st December 2007.

E Plan System and Map Shop initiatives are being introduced in the Planning Department and will be completed by 28th February, 2008.

LA Quotes i.e. online Quotations System in partnership with Kerry County Council have been installed in Infrastructure Department and will be rolled out to all service areas in January, 2008.

Advertisements will be placed in the local press in January 2008 following consultation with Workplace Partnership and the Corporate Policy Group with regard to “Consultations on Customer Service Standards”

A member of the Polish Community has been employed in the Motor Taxation office to carry out a survey and prepare a report for Carlow local authorities in relation to access /barriers to service delivery in respect of the migrant community and staff.

Workplace Partnership

Workplace partnership continues to play an integral part in how we do business. Issues arising from the Change, Modernisation Agenda continue to be discussed in this forum ie attendance management, customer service initiatives, rationalisation of the revenue collection service and PMDS.

PMDS

The rollout of PMDS will be completed by 31st December 2007. Ongoing training is being provided for Senior Managers and Line Managers to develop their communication and management style in terms of managing performance, employee expectations and developing personal influence. The training is being facilitated by Shrc Ltd. The Hay evaluation report on PMDS will be examined by the Councils Management Team and Workplace Partnership and the recommendations will be implemented.

Health & Safety

Ancillary Statements updated in respect of Roads, Housing, Water Services, Environment and Fire Services.

Annual Review of Parent Safety Statement completed.

Promotion of safety Awareness organised by the Safety Consultative Committee and Workplace Partnership for European Health & Safety Week in October which included a Staff Wellbeing Programme.

Instruction to Contractors Policy completed.

Safe System of Work Plans have been introduced for routine maintenance work in Water Services and Roads.

Training & Development

Partnership Facilitator has been delegated responsibility for Training, Learning & Development.

Continued Professional Development (CPD) Accreditation Scheme has been rolled out.

Training in "A Positive Working Environment" is being rolled out to all Elected Members and Staff in January 2008.

The following will be a priority:

- Capacity Building for Line Managers

- Coaching/Mentoring
- Interview Skills for Staff
- Health & Safety

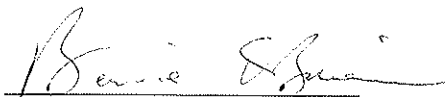
Computerised (Intranet) based Induction Training, Learning & Development Programme has been prepared in partnership with the Human Resources Department, Health and Safety Advisor and Phoenix Safety Consultants.

Disability Awareness Seminar has been arranged for Design Professionals, Planners, Engineers, Technicians and other relevant personnel in County Carlow, which will focus on promoting awareness in disability and accessibility issued and encourage best practices on site in January 2008.

Social Inclusion is mainstreamed across all Council activities and Carlow Local Authorities are the lead authority in respect of many initiatives under the County Development Board process - see report attached.

I confirm my satisfaction that the Verification Process has been applied across all service areas and functions under the aegis of Carlow Local Authorities and recommend that the progress achieved and to be achieved justifies payment of the increase due under Towards 2016.

Yours sincerely,



Bernie O'Brien
Acting County Manager,
Carlow Local Authorities