



# Cavan County Council

Comhairle Chontae an Chabháin



**Courthouse**

Teach Na Cúirte

**Cavan**

An Cabháin

**Telephone Numbers**

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049 437 8600

Corporate Services  
049 437 8601

Johnston Central Library  
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Finance Department  
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Roads  
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Housing  
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Community & Enterprise  
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15<sup>th</sup> July, 2008



Ms. Chris Gavigan,  
Assistant Chief Executive,  
Local Government Management Services Board,  
35-39 Ushers Quay,  
Dublin 8.

**Re; Towards 2016 – Performance Verification  
(March 2008 – September 2008)**

Dear Ms. Gavigan,

I am pleased to report ongoing progress in Cavan Local Authorities. Our Senior Management Team re-assess our Strategic Objectives on a regular basis to ensure conformity with Towards 2016. Our business plans for 2008 are now being implemented and these again are reflective of the issues agreed by Government and the social partners. The PMDS process is working well and has continued to focus on skills including flexible approaches, equality, social inclusion, project management, team working and community development. All Personal Development Plans for 2008 have been completed (92% of all staff which includes people absent on maternity leave etc.) We are currently re-evaluating the process and linking it more closely with business and team plans and the individual development taking place as part of the Leadership Programme.

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Developing the talent and potential of our staff is at the forefront of our activities in Cavan. The significant expansion of investment in training and development continued in 2008. The intensive leadership course designed to develop emerging talent and including four outdoor workers has been continued and plans are drawn up for a further intake in September 2008. The purpose is to develop innovation, confidence, skills and resilience of up to 40 staff members who will in turn develop a positive leadership culture in the organisation going forward. Significant focus continues to be placed on the Health & Safety area. We are also committing significant resources to Training & Development with 4.94% of our budget committed. Plans are being finalised to examine how the organisation might build on the return to learning initiative through structured training for outdoor staff leading to application for Grade III administrative and other posts. We were presented with the FAS Excellence Through People in May 2008.

One unique element of the shared service approach in the region is ongoing co-operation/joint delivery with other Southern Border Counties and with our Northern Ireland counterparts. An example is the significant progress in progressing a joint proposal with Fermanagh District Council to create the first Cross-border Geopark in the world – UNESCO are currently considering our application. A successful application to SEUPB in 2008 will yield €2.8m in PEACE III monies to Cavan over the next three years. Cavan leads many shared service initiatives with other counties including water metering and emergency planning (both four counties).

The Partnership Process has been reinvigorated in Cavan following difficulties in 2007. A new committee has been formed and intensive training provided. The organisational culture in Cavan promotes the practice of working in partnership in a process based on respect, trust and active listening.

2008 has been characterised by a number of new innovative projects. These include;

- Review of advertisement policy to maximise contact with citizens
- Provision of online motor tax kiosk adjacent to Motor Tax Office to shorten queues at peak times
- Part V database/process development to ensure collection and spend of funds is expedited.
- A major water conservation initiative including collaboration with local Chambers of Commerce ([www.waterwise.ie](http://www.waterwise.ie))
- Improvements to customer databases
- Linking with children and adults in Fermanagh in an initiative based in Cavan Museum entitled the 'Connecting People Places & Heritage Project'
- An initial review of Engineering Area Structure
- Producing a user friendly guide to planning in Cavan

We have accelerated our progress in enhancing customer service and providing better service to marginalised staff. Our activities in the disability area continue to receive positive comment. A recent project called DisabledGO will involve 500 businesses, tourist facilities and shops. These will be rated on the basis of accessibility and the information presented on a dedicated website. We are the first Irish rural local authority to do this. We continue to input into the process at

national level through membership of the LGMSB Steering Group, the LGMSB HR Committee and DASPAC. The County Development Board has prioritised the area of disability for interagency co-operation following an initiative by Cavan County Council. Implementation of the National Disability Strategy is a corporate priority.

Cavan Local Authorities continue to focus on the life cycle approach. In 2008 there has been a renewed focus on Older People including the provision of an adult play area in Cavan (2<sup>nd</sup> in country). A project with OPEN and local lone parents has won widespread praise. This culminated in the publication of a booklet to advise this marginalised group about housing options, tenant responsibilities etc. to facilitate increased communication. Our continuing focus on youth has continued with initial approval received for a grant of 3m approved for the development of a major Scouting Complex at Castlesaunderson in partnership with Scouting Ireland.

Significant progress has been made on other interagency approaches including economic development, Travellers, single rural men, youth and educational provision. The Community Forum has significantly expanded its activities and is now recognised as a model of good practice in the country. The County Development Board/SIM Groups role have been strengthened in accordance with page 76 of Towards 2016.

In March 2007, I gave examples of cross-sectional teams in the organisation. All of the information contained therein continues to be relevant and is not repeated in the interests of brevity.

In general, there is a growing learning culture in the organisation with an emphasis on concrete achievements on behalf of our citizens. We believe in developing a flexible and committed workforce and have expectations of good performance by all. Many new initiatives are planned for the future and I look forward to briefing you on continuing success in due course.

Yours sincerely,

  
J. Keyes,  
County Manager.