



Comhairle Cathrach Luimnigh

Limerick City Council

Áras na Cathrach
Luimneach
Telefón: 061 · 407100
Fax: 061 · 415266
Email: info@limerickcity.ie
Website: www.limerickcity.ie

City Hall
Limerick
Telephone: 061 · 407100
Fax: 061 · 415266
Email: info@limerickcity.ie
Website: www.limerickcity.ie

Ms. Chris Gavigan & Mr. Matt Merrigan,
Joint Chairs,
Local Authority National Partnership Advisory Group,
C/O Local Government Management Services Board,
Floor 2,
Cumberland Hse,
Fenian St.
Dublin 2.

22nd April, 2008.

Re: Towards 2016 Local Authority Sectoral Action Plan

Dear Sir/Madam,

I refer to the above plan and in particular to my previous correspondence of the 21st of December last.

In that correspondence I recommended payment to all grades of staff but drew your attention to opposition from the fire-fighters and general operatives to the introduction of fortnightly pay.

At that time a proposal had been developed by the Partnership Steering Committee aimed at resolving the issue.

Union Position

This proposal is not acceptable to either grouping. The position of both groupings as articulated by their union SIPTU is that the proposal to introduce fortnightly pay is at variance with their contracts of employment and that it's method of introduction as developed by the Partnership Steering Committee is in breach of the Payment of Wages Act 1991.

In addition the union stated that there is no provision contained within T2016 that can be at variance with the above statute.

Council Position

The Council has sought since 2004 as part of Sustaining Progress and Towards 2016 the introduction of fortnightly pay.

As part of the Towards 2016 Action Plan the Council put fortnightly pay as one of its major change proposals and flagged it as so as far back as December 2006.



The reason why this change is being introduced is to improve organisational performance through process redesign of the payment of wages/salaries in Limerick City Council. This is in accordance with Section 32.2 of Towards 2016.

Its introduction will create efficiencies in the payroll department which will have a positive effect for staff in terms of turnaround time for answering queries, processing overtime, pay increases, arrears etc.

All staff with the exception of general operatives signed up to the introduction of fortnightly pay at the time the local action plan was adopted in May 2007.

It was however acknowledged at the Partnership meeting on the adoption of action plan that discussions would have to continue with regard to general operatives in order to see if a resolution could be found. It was as a result of these discussions that the proposal on fortnightly pay was sent to general operatives at the beginning of this year. This proposal was an attempt to resolve the concerns that general operative representatives have been articulating at Partnership meetings.

The fire-fighters having initially indicated that they accepted the provisions of the Plan advised the Council towards the end of 2007 that they did not accept the proposal to introduce fortnightly pay.

The Council is fully satisfied that the proposal does not interfere with the employees' statutory rights under the Payment of Wages Act.

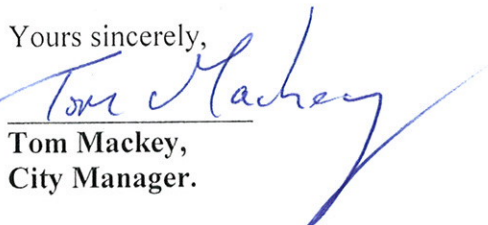
It is accepted that some of staff involved have contracts stating that they will be paid weekly but these contracts also refer to the acceptance of change negotiated by unions on behalf of their members.

Conclusion

The purpose of this letter is to advise you that the issue remains unresolved and that the Council is referring this matter to third party under Section 27.9 of Towards 2016.

The Council is not seeking to withhold pay increases that it has already recommended but will review this as the matter progresses.

Yours sincerely,


Tom Mackey,
City Manager.