



Limerick County Council



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**Ms Chris Gavigan,
LANPAG,
Local Government Management Services Board,
Local Government House,
35-39 Ushers Quay,
Dublin 8.**

10th July 2008

Re: Progress Report – Towards 2016

Dear Ms Gavigan,

I enclose for your attention Limerick County Council's Progress Report under Towards 2016 for the period 1st March 2008 – 30th September 2008.

I can confirm that the Progress Report has been the subject of discussion and agreement by the Council's Partnership Committee at its meeting held on 3rd July 2008.

I am pleased to report that staff relations within the organisation remain good. This is the result of ongoing extensive communication and consultations between all parties, resulting in a common understanding and appreciation of the challenges facing this organisation. In this regard I must commend the staff, their unions and management for their total commitment to advancing change in the organisation, either through the partnership process or through the staff relations mechanisms.

You will notice from the Progress Report that Limerick County Council has advanced the process of change within the organisation since my last report. The thrust behind many of the changes has been to improve internal processes so as to enable a better quality of service to be delivered to the public the Council serves. Examples include:-

- Staff redeployment to critical business areas.
- Re-organisation of structures to produce greater efficiencies, e.g. organisation review under way, Water Works Caretaker re-organisation.
- Introduction of greater range of attendance patterns of staff, e.g. expansion of On-Call arrangements for staff in business areas where 7 day cover is required; the introduction of Saturday working for staff in the Water Quality area, etc.
- Recruitment procedures adapted to ensure greater accessibility to candidates outside the public service; specialisation of specific posts; introduction of new Attendance Management Policies and Sick Pay Scheme, etc.
- Preparation is well under way for the introduction of the new integrated HR/Payroll/Superannuation System that will assist the Council in managing its staff.
- Customer service initiatives include the re-organisation of the revenue collection service, which will provide clients with a range of payment options, account managers, etc.
- The continuing implementation of PMDS throughout the organisation.

In addition to looking inwards on structures and procedures, the Council has also been active on deepening linkages with the community it serves. Initiatives include:-

- The Council's Fire Fighters have been involved in community fire initiatives such as installation of smoke alarms in national schools.
- Castletroy District Park will open to the public in August 2008; Ballykeeffe District Park is at public consultation stage; work is continuing on heritage walks etc. at Lough Gur.
- Work has commenced on the new Civic Offices in Kilmallock, comprising Council Offices, Courthouse and Public Library. Work is also under way on the new Fire Station project in Kilmallock.

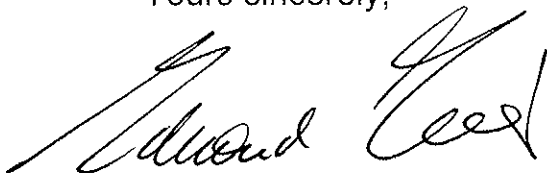
- In June the Council held its annual Primary Schools' Environment Achievement Awards. Over one thousand entries were received from forty schools in the county. Two hundred and fifty children attended the awards ceremony in Curragh Chase.
- In June the Council published a 16-page magazine 'In Touch', which outlines various Council initiatives. The magazine was distributed to householders as a free supplement in the local newspapers circulating in the area. It is also available in all Council offices, facilities libraries, etc. It is proposed that this publication will be an annual event.

Given the above and the content of the Progress Report I can confirm that I am satisfied that staff have co-operated with on-going change for the period under review.

However I am concerned that the Fire Fighters have yet to agree a change programme for the service even though they are participating in normal on-going change. I am aware that there are ongoing discussions taking place regarding this issue. I would be hopeful that there would be a satisfactory outcome to these discussions prior to the September payment date. I will keep you informed of developments as they arise.

In that regard, I am in a position to recommend payment of the next phase of the pay award under Towards 2016, with the exception of the Fire Fighters at this time.

Yours sincerely,



Edmond Gleeson
County Manager