

COMHAIRLE CONTAE MHAIGH EO

Aras an Chontae, Caislean a 'Bharraigh, Contae Mhaigh Eo.
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Your Ref.

Our Ref.



12th December 2007

Ms. Chris Gavigan,
Joint Chair,
LANPAG,
35-39 Ushers Quay,
DUBLIN 8.

**Re: Performance Verification Under Towards 2016
(June 2007-February 2008)**

Dear Ms. Gavigan,

I wish to refer to your letter dated 31st October 2007, regarding the performance verification under Towards 2016 (June 2007 – February 2008).

Our original Action Plan/Progress Report under this social partnership agreement was submitted to you in March 2007.

I wish to report compliance with the terms of the agreement by all stakeholders in Mayo Local Authorities, and with their full involvement in the Partnership process.

I also confirm that industrial peace has been maintained and agreed industrial relations machinery as detailed in this agreement has been used by Mayo Local Authorities, where necessary.

Our Authorities continue to make substantial progress across all activities. Further to our previously outlined objectives for 2007, we are making progress in a number of key areas including:-

- Ensuring continuing communications with and involvement of all our employees through the Partnership Process. We have implemented the "Handling Significant Change" protocol and High Level meetings have also

taken place. It has been agreed with all stakeholders that full and meaningful consultation will continue to take place going forward particularly in relation to all major change within our four local authorities. Proposed changes arising from the Water Services Investment Programme 2005 - 2007, water metering and water conservation project, waste management, roads/machinery yard, compliance with Working Time Act 1997, and the future of revenue collection are being dealt with in the Partnership process.

PMDS has been successfully introduced into the four Mayo Local Authorities under the auspices of the Partnership Committee and a review is presently in progress. The process is being monitored by our Corporate Affairs Directorate. The Hay Group PMDS Evaluation Report will shortly be examined by our PMDS implementation team, and all recommendations regarding the process will be considered.

- We continue to enhance our links with the local community, with some examples below:
 - Ongoing support to the County Community Forum - approximately 450 community and voluntary organisations registered;
 - Provision of information and supports, including funding information, to numerous community organizations'
 - Organizing Comhairle na nÓg and working with schools and youth groups to ensure youth representation from Mayo at local and national level.
 - Co-ordinating Mayo's first Science Festival in conjunction with communities throughout the county;
 - Initiating the Mayo Immigrants Forum to work with many non-Irish communities towards integration in the county;
- We continue to prioritise the Road Safety Service through imaginative targeted programmes. Among the initiatives rolled out this year include, young drivers driving skills course, road safety road show, cycling skills day aimed at young children, and star rider motorcycle training.
- The Council continues to maximise the use of the Strategic Policy Committees. An example of a policy that emanated from one of the Strategic Policy Committees is the Walking Strategy, and a Walking Development

Officer for the county has now been appointed, and a Walking Strategy for the county is now being prepared.

- We continuously strive to improve our customer service:-
 - In late 2006, an MRBI survey was carried out. TNSmrbi carried out an independent customer satisfaction survey on behalf of Mayo Local Authorities. The objective of the research was to identify which local authority services, if any, require improvement from a customer care perspective and which services/initiatives would benefit from increased publicity/promotion. A total of 500 face to face interviews were conducted throughout the County. In 2007, Ms Sinead O'Sullivan, TNSmrbi presented the Cultural, Education, Heritage & Corporate Affairs SPC with findings and recommendations of the survey and a sub-Group of the Committee was formed to review the findings. A review report and recommendations have been approved by the Cultural, Educational, Heritage and Corporate Affairs S.P.C. and the Council Elected Members, and are presently being implemented.
 - Also, a Mystery Shopper Staff Survey was carried out in late 2006. The Mystery Shopper system employed was based on the RATER service quality system measuring the service against the principal measurement categories of Reliability, Assurance, Tangibles, Empathy and Responsiveness. Similar to the MRBI survey, a review report and recommendations have been approved by the Cultural, Education, Heritage and Corporate Affairs SPC and the Council Elected Members, and are presently being implemented.
- Mayo Local Authorities are working towards Universal Accessibility:-
 - Over the past year Mayo Local Authorities (MLA) have been carrying out accessibility audits and are now progressing with preparation of an implementation plan for future years. It is planned to progressively provide an environment whereby all persons may independently access our facilities and services.
 - In order to comply with its obligations under the Disability Act, and to provide leadership locally, the Council set up a multi disciplinary team, to improve accessibility to our buildings and services. The success of this team is demonstrated by the Council's achievement in winning the overall public O2 Ability Award.

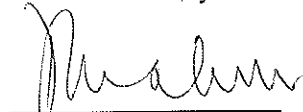
- The Council have an extensive Capital Programme in place to the value of €115m and the following are some projects completed in 2007:
 - The Charlestown By-Pass Road Project has opened in November 2007, ahead of the projected opening date.
 - The completion of sewerage facilities in Castlebar and Ballina and extension of Tuam Regional Water Supply to Shrule.
 - Fire Stations in Westport and Achill have been completed in 2007.
 - The Library Headquarters at Castlebar have been completed, and is now open to the public.

- Mayo County Council is the holder of an Excellence Through People award which it has held continuously since it first achieved the award in 1997. Earlier this year, Mayo County Council received the ISO 27001 standard for IT services throughout the four Mayo Local Authorities. Both the Excellence Through People award and this ISO standard demonstrate commitment to the pursuit of excellence through training, development and involvement of our employees at all levels within our local authorities and also demonstrates our commitment to the use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in the delivery of our services to all our communities.

- Mayo Local Authorities will continue to work closely with the Local Government Management Services Board and to use the agreed dispute resolution mechanisms where this becomes necessary as set out in *Towards 2016*. There is an ongoing commitment to using the Partnership model to maintain a stable industrial relations environment. Recognition that Partnership is the way we carry out our activities is the key to our ongoing successes.

I would again wish to point out that the success of Mayo Local Authorities is dependent on compliance by all stakeholders with the terms of the *Towards 2016*. It is our view that there is a genuine willingness on all sides to co-operate at all levels with this agreement and in this regard I am confident that substantial progress will be made during the life of this agreement in Mayo Local Authorities.

Yours sincerely,



D. Mahon,
County Manager