



# Comhairle Chontae Chill Mhantáin

## WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

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13<sup>th</sup> December 2007

Ms. Chris Gavigan/Mr. Matt Merrigan,  
Joint Chairs LANPAG,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor,  
Cumberland House,  
Fenian Street,  
Dublin 2.



**Re: Towards 2016 (June 2007 – February 2008/Wicklow Local Authorities Progress Report)**

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Dear Chairpersons,

I refer to your correspondence dated 31<sup>st</sup> October 2007 in relation to the above matter and enclose herewith as requested a completed checklist signed by the Joint Chairs of the Local Workplace Partnership Committee which highlights recent progress achieved by Wicklow Local Authorities.

The attached checklist referred to above together with this Progress Report set out hereunder demonstrates that there has been verifiable productivity, efficiency and effectiveness gains achieved by Wicklow Local Authorities during the period covered and in this regard, I set out hereunder some examples under 6 separate headings for your information viz:-

### Enhanced Customer Services

- Further development of on-line access to services by customers including:
  - The live webcasting of Council meetings
  - Information on Planning Services for each local authority in Wicklow includes database and GIS
  - Information on housing services for each local authority in Wicklow currently includes information on options and forms
- Progress being made on the roll out of Broadband in the towns of Kilcoole, Newtownmountkennedy and Blessington
- Significant progress being made on the Swimming Pool/Community Centre Project for Greystones
- Significant progress being made on the Swimming Pool project for Bray
- Mobile Library Service extended from 33 to 34 service points

- Customer Action Plan/Charter/Staff Charter rolled out in 2006
- The format for a further Customer Consultation Process has been agreed
- The evaluation/Review of the Customer Action Plan/Charter/Staff Charter is planned
- Flexible opening hours in place in most local authority offices

### **Co-Operation with Other Agencies**

- County Development Board which comprises representatives from Local Government, Local Development Agencies, State Agencies operating at local level, Social Partners etc, meet on a quarterly basis
- Strategic Policy Committees meet on a quarterly basis
- The Housing and Planning Departments liaise with the Health Service Executive on an ongoing basis
- Wicklow Local Authorities liaise and co-operate with a wide range of Government Departments and State Agencies on an ongoing basis
- Wicklow Local Authorities liaise closely with the EPA and An Bord Pleanala etc.
- Wicklow County Council has arranged a number of Showcases in Dublin aimed at promoting Wicklow as a business location. These Showcases have been supported by Local and National Development Agencies such as the IDA and Enterprise Ireland etc.

### **Development of Shared Services**

- Wicklow Local Authorities are committed to the implementation of recommendations arising from the review of Local Government Financing in achieving internal efficiencies
- Considerable co-operation between Wicklow Local Authorities in relation to the sharing of services such as ICT, Human Resources etc
- Local Working Group is doing preliminary work on the internal business processes to facilitate the roll-out of the new National HR Payroll Superannuation System.
- Co-operation with the Town Councils re the Non Domestic Water Metering Project
- Co-Operation by Fire Services Personnel with the new National Computer-aided Mobilisation System (CAMP) which came into effect in October 2007.
- On-going co-operation between the Wicklow Local Authorities and Dublin City Council in relation to the supply of water.

### **Staff Training/PMDS**

- PMDS almost fully rolled out in Wicklow Local Authorities
- PMDS is the subject of ongoing review in each Council department
- Personnel training information sheets attached to PDP's are being returned to the Council's Training Officer and appropriate Training courses are being arranged
- A wide range of training provided to staff throughout the organisation
- A new Three Step Return To Learning Programme has been developed and is being rolled out.

## **Organisational Change and Innovation under Towards 2016**

- Local working group established to progress the roll out of water metering, billing and collection in respect of the Non-Domestic Water Metering Project across all Wicklow Local Authorities
- Discussions being held with some staff in relation to their changing roles as a result of the procurement of some Water Services Projects by means of DBO
- Significant Change Group comprising reps from Management, Unions and Staff meets on a regular basis to discuss issues in relation to Organisational Change
- Discussions taking place with the Revenue Collectors/Impact in relation to the Rationalisation/Restructuring of the Revenue Collection Function
- The Fire Service and the Library Service have recently been restructured
- Ongoing co-operation of all staff with PMDS
- Completion of a local Anti-Poverty Strategy
- Ongoing development of Safety Management Systems

## **Value for Money/Efficiency/Effectiveness**

- Co-operation with the outsourcing of Water Services projects is being achieved under the auspices of Workplace Partnership
- Wicklow Local Authorities have modern Financial Management Systems in place
- Work is ongoing in the “Costing of Services” project
- There is considerable co-operation between the Wicklow Local Authorities in relation to the sharing of services such as ICT, Human Resources etc
- Staff co-operating with measures to improve Value for Money
- Wicklow County Council has recently established an “Audit Committee” in accordance with the requirements of the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government.
- Wicklow Local Authorities have fully embraced the National Service Indicator Project and have made the relevant returns to the Local Government Management Services Board on a timely basis.

The above examples represent a sample of the commitment of the staff of Wicklow Local Authorities to the Modernisation/Change Programme which has been on-going over a considerable period of time.

In addition, I wish to confirm that industrial peace continues to be maintained in Wicklow Local Authorities.

In my initial progress report to you under the Towards 2016 verification process I indicated to you that the Wicklow Local Authorities Action Plan/Progress Report (1<sup>st</sup> December 2006 – 31<sup>st</sup> May 2007) had not been formally accepted by the Retained Fire Service.

Since then a number of meetings between Management and SIPTU who are representing the Retained Firefighters, have taken place and I am pleased to advise you that SIPTU has now confirmed in writing its agreement with the Action Plan/Progress Report.

Accordingly, I am now in a position to recommend the last Phase pay increase (2% with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2007) due under the Towards 2016 Pay Agreement due to Retained Firefighters in the county.

In conclusion, in the light of ongoing progress being made by Wicklow Local Authorities in relation to the Modernisation Programme/Change Agenda, I recommend that the next general round pay increase due with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> March 2008 (2.5%) under the Towards 2016 Agreement be made to all appropriate staff of Wicklow Local Authorities (including the Retained Firefighters).

Yours sincerely,

  
**Eddie Sheehy,**  
**County Manager**