

22nd June, 2010

To: Each Member of Donegal County Council

I hereby give notice under Paragraph 7 of Schedule 10 of the Local Government Act 2001, having received a requisition from the Mayor pursuant to Paragraph 6 (1) (a) of said schedule, that a Special Meeting of Donegal County Council shall be held at 10.00 AM on Monday 28th June, 2010 in the Council Chamber, County House, Lifford, County Donegal to transact the following business, as set out in agenda contained within the aforementioned requisition. A copy of the requisition is attached.

AGENDA

To receive a presentation from the County Manager on how the decision taken by Donegal County Council in relation to item 27(b) on the reconvened agenda of the Council meeting held on June 14th 2010, (Organisation Development Project) will be implemented over the next six months.

E Sweeney
Meetings Administrator

MINUTES OF SPECIAL MEETING OF DONEGAL COUNTY
COUNCIL, HELD IN THE COUNTY HOUSE, LIFFORD ON 28th
JUNE, 2010

C/363/10 MEMBERS PRESENT

Clrs. B. Byrne, Mayor, D. Alcorn, L. Blaney, J. Boyle, C. Brogan, G. Crawford, M. Doherty, P. Doherty, M. Farren, M. Harley, J. Harte, C. Harvey, D. Larkin, P. Mac Lochlainn, F. McBrearty, N. McBride, C. Mc Conalogue, S. Mc Eniff, I. McGarvey, P. McGowan, B. McGuinness, S. O'Domhnaill, B. O'Neill, T. Pringle, M. Quinn, J. Ryan and T. Slowey.

C/364/10 OFFICIALS PRESENT

Mr Michael McLoone, County Manager, Mr Liam Ward, Acting Director of Corporate and Housing, Mr Seamus Neely, Director of Water, Environment and Emergency, Mr Garry Martin, Acting Head of Finance, Mr Michael Heaney, Director of Community, Culture and Planning, Mr James Boyle, Senior Engineer, Mr. Michael Mc Garvey, Senior Engineer, Mr. Aidan Smith, Senior Executive Engineer, Mr Eunan Sweeney, Meetings Administrator, and Ms Anne Marie Crawford, Staff Officer.

C/365/10 PRESENTATION ON DECISION TAKEN BY DONEGAL COUNTY COUNCIL IN RELATION TO THE ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECT TO BE IMPLEMENTED OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS

Members considered documentation circulated with the agenda and at the meeting in relation to the above. The report by the County Manager dated 28th June, 2010, and circulated at the meeting, included copy of letter dated 23rd June, 2010 from Assistant General Secretary, IMPACT to its members, together with 2 attachments – Attachment 1: Specifying the Payroll Process and Attachment 2: Procurement and Purchasing Reform.

The Mayor informed Members that the purpose of the meeting was to brief all concerned in relation to the operational aspects of the WSW .

Responding to a query in relation to correspondence sent by the Mayor on the 21st June, 2010 to the Minister for the

Environment, Heritage and Local Government, the Mayor advised that it was a follow up action to the decision taken at the Adjourned Council Meeting on the 14th June 2010.

The County Manager updated Members in relation to his meetings with the Unions on the 23rd June, 2010 and discussions on various aspects of the new management system and how it could be used in tandem with ongoing negotiations and consultation to implement the Public Service Agreement. IMPACT, he advised, had confirmed that they were not in a position to discuss implementation of the Croke Park Agreement locally until the role of the national bodies was clarified. He was, he affirmed, confident that the implementation strategy proposed by Donegal County Council would satisfy Government requirements.

The County Manager stated that Members had to decide the comparative priority between services and the level of services to be targeted.

It was he advised now possible to link a number of processes including Payroll, Purchasing and Procurement, Income Collection, and elements of the Planning and Housing process to the (Transforming Public Services) agenda through the Whole System of Work. These, he indicated, were the six demonstration services proposed for testing over the six month period. He suggested that the simplest way of resolving the issue would be for the Council to write to Minister Calleary and ask for clarification in relation to the points raised by IMPACT.

Clr Farren voiced strong concerns that the processes outlined above would lead to a diminution of services in Carndonagh PSC, result in job losses and the removal of Planning and Community and Enterprise services from Carndonagh.

The County Manager affirmed that the aim was to strengthen not weaken the Public Service Centres and that Donegal was the best placed local authority to implement the Government agenda on the integration of the Public Services.

A root and branch review was necessary in relation to the number of staff needed to deliver the services required by the public and that it was anticipated that staff who were not

busy in one particular area could assist in other departments. The WSW would provide management with effective tools for dealing with these type of situations.

Members raised a range of issues and it was suggested that the many of the proposals for the WSW were hypothetical and theoretical. Some Members were of the opinion that it would be inappropriate at this stage to set standards for the incoming Manager.

Concern was expressed in relation to the absence of signed agreements for much of the research and development work. Members enquired as to what progress had been made in relation to the following matters agreed at the Adjourned Council Meeting on the 14th June, 2010:-

1. That clear and viable measures of the outcomes to be achieved during the testing period for the WSW be provided to the Council in advance.
2. That the Internal Audit Section examine the level of under budgeting in the years 2004-2009.

It was generally acknowledged that there was an onus on Members, as custodians of Donegal Incorporated, to get back to providing basic services and ensuring the efficient delivery of same. It was imperative, they advised, that there was no diminution in service provision for the electorate of the county.

Clr. Larkin proposed, seconded by Clr. Brogan, that the Council accept the County Manager's recommendation and write to Minister Calleary seeking clarification in relation to the issues raised by IMPACT.

Clr. Farren advised that he was still unhappy with the County Manager's response and requested assurances that services would be retained in the Carndonagh Public Services Centre.

On the proposal of Clr. Mac Lochlainn, seconded by Clr. Ryan, it was resolved to adjourn the meeting for 10 minutes to allow the County Manager clarify the situation regarding

the Carndonagh Public Services Centre with the Members of the Inishowen Electoral Area.

On resumption, responding to calls for reassurance in relation to the future of the remaining Public Service Centres, the County Manager affirmed that a commitment had been given to each Electoral Area that there would be no diminution of services as a result of the ongoing review, and that where there was a significant drop in the demand for particular services, changes would be made only as a result of consultation between staff and Members.

The County Manager said that he was committed to a decentralised model of service delivery, which he indicated would strengthen area-based delivery systems.

Referring to the implementation of the new system of management and the six demonstration services targeted, he confirmed that their effective implementation would allow Members see the volumes of work involved, the time taken to process various activities, and identify problem areas within these services.

He added, that this would enable them to look at relative costings, ways of improving the quality of service and the turnaround times for service delivery.

He went on to say major decisions in relation to service delivery at Electoral Area level would not be taken until after the six month testing period had been implemented, or until such time as Members had been adequately consulted.

The resolution proposed earlier by Clr. Larkin and seconded by Clr. Brogan, to write to Minister Calleary was adopted.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.