

Division H: **Miscellaneous Services**
Division J: **Central Management Charges**



H Miscellaneous Services

H04 Franchise Costs

Elections

Sligo County Council prepares the Register of Electors annually and as always a major effort was made to achieve the highest possible degree of accuracy of comprehensiveness in compiling the Register. On the draft register for 2010/2011 51,983 electors are registered.

J Central Management Charges

J02 General Corporate Services

Introduction

Corporate Services includes a range of important functions, including administration of meetings, provision of training and other supports for elected members, the provision of Information Services, and the delivery of the highest standards of customer service for the people of Sligo.

Communications, Customer Services and Freedom of Information

The Communications Office provides information services to the Elected Members, staff, media and general public, as well as providing administrative support to the Cathaoirleach of Sligo County Council and Mayor of Sligo Borough Council. The office also administers Freedom of Information requests and information requests submitted under the 'Access to Information on the Environment' Regulations.

Newsletters

The monthly e-newsletter provides news from all the major service areas. The newsletter is e-mailed to elected members, staff and a number of subscribers, and is also available on the Sligo Local Authorities' websites.

Customer Services

Sligo County Council expects its services to be appraised to the highest standards, and the Customer Service Desk enables the authority to provide a professional, friendly customer-focused service. The 'Desk' provides a first point of contact for visitors to County Hall, or people who e-mail or phone the Council. The introduction of the e-direct correspondence tracking system ensures that queries are dealt with promptly and efficiently.

Accessible Information

The Communications office endeavors to ensure its publications are available to all its customers.

The Local Authorities websites have been upgraded to make them fully accessible to people with visual impairment and coordination difficulties. The Authority's weekly roads and traffic report has also been extended to include information on footpath repairs, which are of particular interest to people who are visually impaired or reliant on wheelchairs.

Radio Programme/podcast

The Podcast facility launched back in December 2007 allows people access a broadcast of news and information on-line. The facility enables Sligo Local Authorities to provide news to a listening audience.

The podcast is also broadcast as a scheduled programme by Ocean FM called 'Council Focus', the programme is broadcast on the second Sunday of every month, with a repeat the following Wednesday. This initiative greatly increases Sligo Local Authorities ability to convey important information to people who are reliant on this medium.

Open Local Government

The Communications Office regularly makes presentations on the aims, objectives and services of the Council for students of local second and third level schools. In recent years the programme has been extended to involve a series of visits from local Disability Groups under Sligo Local Authorities' 'Open Local Government' Programme. A number of local groups have completed the 'Open Local Government' course and members of the group have been presented with certificates by the Cathaoirleach of the Council.

Websites

Many of the main service areas, including Finance and Motor Tax, enable customers to transact their business online. The Communications Office works with the Information Technology Section to monitor review and update the Sligo Local Authority websites on a regular basis. On-line customers can subscribe to a menu of information services, and can register for our monthly e-magazine, monthly diary of events or weekly roads report.

WEBSITES: www.sligococo.ie and www.sligoborough.ie

General Information Services

The Communications Office reviews the delivery of information services on an ongoing basis to ensure information is prepared and conveyed in a clear, understandable and accessible manner.

J03 Information and Communication Technology

Information Systems Development

The IT Department's main targets for 2010 will be the successful implementation of the new HR System , continued consolidation of the existing infrastructure, a strengthening of system security procedures, expansion of online services and the consolidation of a Disaster Recovery Policy.

The development of Geographic Information Systems as an information tool and the expansion of services available on the Internet will continue in 2010

The Council web site is an important source of information and services for the public and its use for the provision of services will continue to be expanded and improved.

Local Government Computer Services Board Charges

A figure of € 259,000 is included to cover Local Government Computer Services Board fixed charges for 2010. €55,000 is being provided to cover LGCSB service level agreements. This brings the total for LGCSB charges in 2010 to €314,000.

Software Licensing

We are required by law to licence all software in use which adds a substantial overhead to the I.T. Budget. The provision for Microsoft software licensing which forms part of a national agreement between the LGCSB and Microsoft is €72,000

A figure of €35,000 is provided for miscellaneous software.

I.T. Training

New technologies continually being implemented require training to be a permanent feature of the I.T. function and an amount of €8,000 is included for this purpose.

The total I.T. estimate is €636,220 and will enable continued maintenance and operation of I.T. in 2010

