

# **Press Releases - County Manager's behaviour unacceptable - 10/07/00**

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## **Councillor Costello regrets non-attendance of the County Manager**

"I note that Mr. Derek Brady, the County Manager, is not attending the annual general meeting of Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council. According to the Institute of Public Administration the role and function of the County Manager is to manage, in partnership with his elected members, the local authority under his control. The Annual General Meeting is one of the most important partnership meetings of the County Council as it is when our new Cathaoirleach is selected. The non-attendance of the manager sends out all the wrong signals to the public."

"If this was a public company with turnover of approximately £80 million (as our county council has) and debts at the last accounts of £9 million, the Chief Executive would attend the AGM in all circumstances. A chief executive in this situation would feel it was essential to convince the shareholders that he was concerned with and in control of the situation."

"When I rang the Local Government Section of the Department of the Environment they stated that it would be unusual, but not unheard of, for the manager not to attend the AGM. The AGM must be held within 14 days before or after the date of last year's AGM. Given that last year's AGM date was set by Ministerial order it would have been clear to the Manager a year ago the time frame within which our Annual General Meeting would have to take place. "

The Department of the Environment spokesperson stated that the whole system of local government operates on the basis of co-operation between the manager and the elected representatives.

"I am calling on the group leaders to organise a meeting with the manager at the first available opportunity to ensure that this principal of co-operation is recognised. We are going into a difficult period in the coming year with the Estimates in October (what level will the charge be next year?), the Buchanan parking report and the implementation of the Traveller Accommodation Programme throughout the County. Members of the public are asking how

accountable is the behaviour of the manager to the public he is supposed to serve.

It is essential that there is a high level of communication between the manager and the members that he is responsible to, in order that they may speak with one voice on the issues that are going to arise in the coming year.