

## Assembly Meeting - Minutes

13<sup>th</sup> March 2026, 12.00pm  
Assembly House, Waterford



Tionól Réigiúnach  
an Deiscirt

Southern Regional  
Assembly

**Presiding:** Leas Cathaoirleach Peggy Ryan.

**Present:** Cllr. Anthony Barry, Cllr. Dan Boyle, Cllr. Pip Breen, Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. Joe Kavanagh, Cllr. Deirdre Kelly, Cllr. Norma Moriarty, Cllr. Ken Murnane, Cllr. Barbara Anne Murphy, Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan, Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan, Cllr. Ben Ward.

**Remote Attendance:** Cllr. Clare Colleran Molloy, Cllr Gillian Coughlan, Cllr. Frankie Daly, Cllr, Jim D'Arcy, Cllr. Kay Dawson, Cllr. Fergal Dennehy, Cllr. Kieran McCarthy, Cllr. Mairín McGrath, Cllr. Bridín Murphy, Mayor John Moran, Cllr. Tony O'Brien, Cllr. Bobby O'Connell, Cllr. Thomas Phelan, Cllr. Terry Shannon, Cllr. John Sheahan, Cllr. Bill Slattery, Cllr. Michael Smith.

**Apologies:** Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Oliver Walsh

**Officials Present:** Cormac Laphorne, Kevin Lynch, Enda Hogan, Ian Ludlow, Omer Sunguroglu, Gary Burke, Claire Breen, Denis Cotter, Dominic Walsh

**Remote Attendance:** David Kelly, Michael Buckley, Marie Harnett, Lisa Slater, Brigh Ryan, Eve Hayden, Elayne Mc'Donnell, Maria Murphy, Ronan O'Brien, Anna Sellars, Oonagh Messette, Lorraine Barron, Elizebeth Howard, Adam Hearne, Kevin Twomey, Anna Higgins, Breda Curran, Samantha Richardson

### 1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 13th February 2026

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> of February 2026, proposed by Cllr. Deirdre Kelly and seconded by Cllr. Joe Kavanagh.

### 2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

### 3. Towards Better Regional Governance: Miguel Vidal-Bover, Policy Analyst at the OECD

Miguel Vidal-Bover delivered an update on the project Towards Better Regional Governance initiated between the Association of Irish Regions and the OECD. Miguel outlined lessons learned from overseas and covered a range of topics including operating in uncertain and demanding contexts, the fiscal environment, territorial inequalities, digital transition, green transition, demographic transitions and multi-level governance systems for regional competitiveness.

A short question-and-answer session followed the presentation, during which several Assembly Members commended Miguel for his work and raised questions on topics such as the power of local government in Ireland, global disruptions, concerns around competitiveness, local democracy, and the Limerick Directly Elected Mayor model.



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#### 4. Commencement of Review of RSES - 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026

Assistant Director Kevin Lynch delivered a presentation on the commencement of the RSES, outlining the regional assemblies' requirements, including key dates for starting the process, the schedule for the consultation initiative, the locations and themes for each consultation event, and the groups that will participate. Kevin also covered the Planning and Development (Amendment) (No. 2) Bill 2025 – Heads of Bill, indicative timelines, the Key Town proposals and their potential impacts, the next steps in the review process, and the role of economic consultants and scenario analysis.

A short question-and-answer session followed, during which Kevin addressed queries from several Assembly Members on topics such as Key Town designation, MASP considerations, infrastructure and social infrastructure needs, amenities, housing, renewable energy management and targets, and the consultation process.

#### 5. Any Other Business

Assistant Director Cormac Laphorne informed the Assembly that staff member Gary Burke would be leaving the organisation the following week. He thanked Gary for his contribution to the team during his time at the Southern Regional Assembly.

#### 6. Date of Next Meeting

10<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at noon, at Assembly House, Waterford.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

**Cllr. Andrew McGuinness**  
**Cathaoirleach**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



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**AGENDA**

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026
2. Matters Arising
3. Towards Better Regional Governance: Miquel Vidal-Bover, Policy Analyst at the OECD
4. Commencement of Review of RSES – 26th March 2026.
5. Any Other Business
6. Date of Next Meeting



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