

Assembly Meeting - Minutes

11 September 2026, 12.00pm

Assembly House, Waterford



Tionól Réigiúnach
an Deiscirt

Southern Regional
Assembly

Presiding: Cathaoirleach Cllr Bobby O'Connell

A record of attendance was taken by means of roll call.

Members Present: Cllr Anthony Barry, Cllr Pip Breen, Cllr Kay Dawson, Cllr Joe Kavanagh, Cllr Deirdre Kelly, Cllr Mairin McGrath, Cllr Ken Murnane, Cllr Barbara Anne Murphy, Cllr Niall O'Callaghan, Cllr Shelia O Callaghan, Cllr Thomas Phelan, Cllr Bill Slattery, Cllr Ben Ward.

Remote Attendance: Cllr Dan Boyle, Cllr John Brennan, Cllr Alan Coleman, Cllr Michael Collins, Cllr Clare Colleran Molloy, Cllr Gillian Coughlan, Cllr Jim D'Arcy, Cllr Fergal Dennehy, Cllr Joe Hannigan, Cllr Kieran McCarthy, Mayor John Moran, Cllr Norma Moriarty, Cllr Bridin Murphy, Cllr Tony O'Brien, Cllr Peggy Ryan, Cllr John Sheahan, Cllr Oliver Walsh.

Officials Present: David Kelly, Kevin Lynch, Dominic Walsh, Pdraig O'Shea, Marie Harnett, Naomi Flood, Ian Ludlow, Oonagh Messette, Samantha Richardson, Niamh O'Sullivan, Jack Shine, Omer Sunguroglu.

Remote Attendance: Enda Hogan, Brigh Ryan, Eoin O' Connor, Mary Molloy, Anna Sellars, Elayne McDonnell, Yvonne Cooney, Denis Cotter, Lorraine Barron, Laoise Doyle, Adam Hearne.

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 10 July 2026

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 10 July 2026, proposed by Cllr Pip Breen, and seconded by Cllr Bill Slattery.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Developing Irish Sea Cooperation (DISC) – Project Update

Samantha Richardson, Development Officer with the Assembly, delivered a presentation providing an update on the Developing Irish Sea Cooperation (DISC) project. Samantha outlined the opportunities presented by the project, its thematic areas, research findings, strategic vision, and key actions.

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation, during which several Assembly Members raised questions on topics including practical examples of how cooperation could be improved, the next steps for the project and the equality of funding contributions from each partner.

4. Regional Planning – RSES Review

Kevin Lynch, Assistant Director with the Assembly, presented an update on the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). Kevin provided an update on the



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consultation process, key issues arising from the submissions, a recap of the June RSES workshop, the content of the RSES, key terms, the purpose of the RSES and relevant provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2026. He also outlined the proposed approach and projected key dates.

A question-and-answer session followed the presentation, during which Members raised questions on a number of issues, including engagement with local authorities, the proposed timeline for finalising the draft RSES, and the role and responsibilities of Tetra Tech in the preparation of the RRES.

Members also raised questions regarding whether the designation of Key Towns provides practical advantages over towns without such a designation, the potential to influence the decisions in relation to areas experiencing significant urban pressure, and how the RSES could support the sustainability and survival of communities.

5. Any Other Business

Director David Kelly announced that there are two upcoming Associated EU Presidency events that the Southern Regional Assembly are involved in. One in Waterford in relation to the THRIVE scheme and the New European Bauhaus and the second in Cork in relation to ESPON week. General attendance approval for these conferences was proposed by Cllr Pip Breen and seconded by Cllr Ken Murnane.

Director David Kelly provided a staff update to the Assembly. The Director welcomed Niamh O'Sullivan, Projects Officer with the Assembly to the team.

Cllr Ben Ward enquired to role of the EU Presidency in relation to future EU budget.

Cllr Thomas Phelan enquired about the possibility of EU project officers being assigned to local authorities.

Ian Ludlow, Senior Staff Officer at Assembly announced that the Annual Report 2025 has been published.

6. Date of Next Meeting

09 October 2026 at noon, at Assembly House, Waterford.

Signed: _____

Cllr Bobby O'Connell
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____



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5. Any Other Business
6. Date of Next Meeting



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