

Assembly Meeting - Minutes

10th October 2025, 12.00pm
Assembly House, Waterford



Tionól Réigiúnach
an Deiscirt

Southern Regional
Assembly

Presiding: Cathaoirleach Andrew McGuinness.

Present: Cllr Anthony Barry, Cllr. Pip Breen, Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. Joe Hannigan, Cllr. Deirdre Kelly, Cllr. Norma Moriarty, Cllr. Ken Murnane, Cllr. Thomas Phelan.

Remote Attendance: Cllr. Bobby O'Connell, Cllr. Jim D'Arcy, Cllr. Joe Kavanagh, Cllr. Bill Slattery, Cllr. Ben Ward, Cllr. Kieran McCarthy, Cllr. Dan Boyle, Cllr. Oliver Walsh, Cllr. Peggy Ryan, Cllr. Clare Colleran Molloy, Mayor John Moran, Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan, Cllr. Bridín Murphy, Cllr. Tony O'Brien, Cllr. Mairín McGrath, Cllr. Terry Shannon, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan, Cllr. John Sheahan, Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan, Cllr. Barbara Anne Murphy.

Officials Present: David Kelly, Cormac Laphorne, Kevin Lynch, Ian Ludlow, Omer Sunguroglu, Richard Jordan, Gary Burke, Naomi Flood, Maria Murphy, Dominic Walsh, Rhiannon Carey Bates, Denis Cotter.

Remote Attendance: Áine Whelan, Eve Hayden, Claire Breen, Elayne McDonnell, Oonagh Messette, Mary Molloy, Sarah Davoren, Enda Hogan, Breda Curran, Michael Buckley, Samantha Richardson, Teresa Lennon, Marie Harnett.

Following the roll call, the Cathaoirleach welcomed Cllr. John Brennan back to the Chamber after illness.

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th September 2025

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 12th September 2025, proposed by Cllr. Pip Breen and seconded by Cllr. Deirdre Kelly.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Presentation on OECD Engagement – Strengthening Ireland's Regions

David Kelly, Director, gave a presentation on a proposed joint project with the three Regional Assemblies and the OECD. This will build on previous work of the OECD looking at strengthening Ireland's regions: towards a stronger multi-level governance system for improved national performance'.

Support for OECD engagement was proposed by Cllr. Pip Breen and seconded by Cllr. Niall O'Callaghan. There were contributions from several Members, who all supported the proposal.

4. Presentation on TALENT4S3 Project

Rhiannon Cary Bates, (EU Projects) and Dominic Walsh (Regional Planning Officer) delivered a presentation on the Talent4S3 project. The project focuses on the attraction & retention of talent for the better deployment of S3. The presentation shared project objectives, and how the project aligns to the RSES objective to support learning at scale. The presentation also highlighted the benefits and



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development of a learning region and implementation to date. There were contributions from several Members, who all were all supportive of the project and its objectives.

5. Standing Orders amendment.

The Director presented a draft text of a Standing Orders amendment which had been requested by Members at the Annual meeting in July. After some discussion, Cllr. John Sheahan requested that a legal opinion be sought to check the validity of the request to hold the Annual meeting in person. The Director confirmed that this would be looked into.

6. Update from Irish Regions European Office and CoR

Teresa Lennon, Head of Office, Irish Regions European Office (IREO) delivered an update on activities of the IREO. Teresa gave an overview of the of IREO, the future direction, and the current activities. Teresa shared updates on the Committee of Regions (CoR). She also shared examples of the impact the Irish delegation has had on the CoR between 2020 and 2025. Teresa then shared insights into the EU policy landscape, the EU budget, and the potential impact on Regional Assemblies.

There were contributions from several members and Cllr. Gillian Coughlan, Head of the Irish Delegation, stressed to Members the potential impact of changes to the EU budget and that now is the time to act.

Re the future of cohesion policy, Director David Kelly confirmed that the Regional Assemblies have been invited to the joint Oireachtas committee on EU Affairs on October 15th.

7. Any Other Business

Cathaoirleach Andrew McGuinness spoke about his and the SRA's presence at the Irish Planning Awards recently.

Director David Kelly advised that Section III of the Planning & Development Act was enabled on October 2nd which requires a 6-month review of the regional strategy. The Director also mentioned the submission on the Kerry CDP plan variation due the end of October.

The Director advised members of some staff changes, Vincent Dunphy is taking early retirement after almost 24 yrs with the Assembly, and both Sharon Murray after almost 17 years with the Assembly and Richard Jordan are moving to new employment. The Director and Cathaoirleach thanked everybody for their commitment and valuable contributions.

Cllr. Mairín McGrath expressed her congratulations to Cllr Niall O'Callaghan who was recently elected as chair of AIR.

8. Date of Next Meeting

14th November at noon, at Assembly House, Waterford.



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Signed: _____

Cllr. Andrew McGuinness
Cathaoirleach

Date: _____



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AGENDA

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th September 2025
2. Matters Arising
3. Potential OECD Engagement for discussion and agreement
4. Presentation on TALENT4S3 Project
5. Standing Orders amendment for discussion
6. Update from Irish Regions European Office and CoR
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of Next Meeting



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