



Tionól Réigiúnach
an Deiscirt

Southern Regional
Assembly

Southern Regional Assembly

12th October 2023, 12:00pm

Assembly House, Waterford and via MS Teams

Minutes

Presiding: Cllr. Terry Shannon, Cathaoirleach.

Present: Cllr. Pip Breen, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan, Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien, Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan, Cllr. Thomas Phelan, Cllr. Oliver Walsh.

Remote Attendance via MS Teams: Cllr. Siobhán Ambrose, Cllr. Robert Beasley, Cllr. Maura Bell, Cllr. Dan Boyle, Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. Joe Carroll, Cllr. Michael Collins, Cllr. Noel Coonan, Cllr. Frankie Daly, Cllr. Deirdre Forde, Cllr. P.J. Kelly, Cllr. Garret Kelleher, Cllr. Kieran McCarthy, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Conor D. McGuinness, Cllr. Ken Murnane, Cllr. Michael Murphy, Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan, Cllr. Sean O'Connor, Cllr. Michael O'Meara, Cllr. Michael O'Shea, Cllr. John Sheahan.

Apologies:

Officials Present: David Kelly, Kevin Lynch, Enda Hogan, Dominic Walsh, Kevin Toomey, Mary Molloy, Marie Harnett, Rebecca Walsh, Denis Cotter, Oonagh Messette, Claire Breen and Omer Sunguroglu.

Officials Remote Attendance via MS Teams: Brigh Ryan, Michael Buckley, Edel Hunt, Elayne McDonnell, Robert Fennelly, Roisin Slattery, Samantha Richardson and Yvonne Cooney.

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

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 8th September 2023

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 8th September, proposed by Cllr. Pip Breen and seconded by Cllr. Gillian Coughlan.

2. Matters Arising

No matters arising.

3. Revision of Standing Orders – for discussion and approval.

A revised set of Standing Orders were presented as requested following the September meeting. The Director reminded the Members that ultimately it is a decision for the Assembly how to run the meetings however it was important to respect the Ministers Direction regarding the possibility for hybrid meetings. Following a discussion, it was agreed not to adopt the revised SO's but continue operating with the original and supplementary SOI's as agreed in 2020.

The Cathaoirleach did encourage Members to try to attend as many meetings as possible in person.



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4. Report on Joint SPA Members Workshop, 2nd June – for approval.

The Recommendation Report and Background Report from the Joint SPA Members Workshop was presented by Kevin Lynch. This document covered:

Session 1 – Democratic Mandate.

Recommendation 1 – Measures to ensure greater awareness of Regional Assembly initiatives at local authority level should be developed.

Recommendation 2 – The Southern Regional Assembly, together with EMRA / NWRA and the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform should prior to the 2024 elections set out a programme in relation to nomination of elected members to the Regional Assembly including briefing on role and responsibilities on the Regional Assembly, geographic / population balance.

Recommendation 3 – There should be a standing item relating to the Committee of the Regions on a quarterly basis.

Recommendation 4 – The issue of Hybrid meetings should be discussed in more detail including consideration of national position, other Regional Assemblies and measures to optimise participation.

Recommendation 5 – The issue of EU Officers at LA level should be discussed in more detail including with Local Authorities and the Department of Housing, Local Government & Heritage.

Session 2 – Linkage to National Level.

Recommendation 6 – The Regional Assembly should continue to press for greater structural integration with relevant government departments.

Recommendation 7 – The implementation mechanisms of the RSES should be improved and communication of progress should be reported to the Members.

Session 3 – Funding and Structure.

Recommendation 8 – The role and nature of differing regional bodies should be reviewed to improve the effectiveness and coordination between these.

Recommendation 9 – The Regional Assembly staffing and financial structure should be reviewed in the context of its role and by reference to other similar public bodies.

The Background report included a recommendation that there should be an overall review of the effectiveness of current structures relating to regional structures in Ireland.

A number of points were made during a wide-ranging discussion including:

- Greater awareness needed for work of the Assembly, both Members and executive;
- How under developed the regional structures are in Ireland in comparison to our European neighbours;
- The need to raise awareness within local authorities and wider political system.

Whilst work is underway to progress these Recommendations, it is envisaged that this topic will be on the agenda for the AIR conference in February 2024.



Quarterly reports to and from Committee of the Regions and Local Authorities will be encouraged.

These recommendations were endorsed, Proposed by Cllr. Pip Breen and Seconded by Cllr. Gillian Coughlan.

5. Update on RSES Workplan.

The updated RSES workplan was presented setting out the priorities over the coming year under the broad headings of Governance Actions, Engagement with Local Authorities, Regional Initiatives, Regional Strategies and Engagement with Governmental Departments and Regional Bodies, the update on the RSES was detailed. The recent additions to the planning team will support delivery especially with an increasing workload. It was agreed, for the 2-year report, items would be traffic lighted to easily identify achievements and obstacles.

The workplan was adopted proposed by Cllr Oliver Walsh and Seconded by Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan

6. Presentation on Project Ireland 2040 – Prospects 2023 / 2024: Ireland's Major Infrastructure Project Pipeline – for information.

Planner Kevin Toomey gave an outline of those projects worth in excess of €25million investment planned for the Southern Region. The region will account for 17% of planned expenditure at €5.65 billion with the main projects being; M20 Cork to Limerick (€ 1.5 billion); BusConnects Cork, Limerick and Waterford (€ 1.3 billion); Cork Docklands (€750 mill.); N21/N69 Adare to Foynes (€450 mill.); M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy (€ 300 mill.) and Waterford North Quays (€170 mill.). Also shown where the projects not included in the 2023 / 2024 list, but will be activated soon after - Cork Light Rail Network; Cork Commuter Rail Network (Phase 2); Limerick Commuter Rail Network; Cork Northern Distributor Road and Limerick Northern Distributor Road. The Greater Dublin Area accounts for 72% of related spending and there is significant concern in the context of RSES and NPF objectives for balanced regional growth.

7. Update on ERDF Regional Programme.

This item will be dealt with at the next Assembly meeting.

8. Any Other Business

Members were advised to Save the Date of the first week in February for the AIR Training Event and Seminar that will be held from the 6th – 8th February in Adare, Co. Limerick.

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held in Assembly House on the 10th November 2023.

Signed: Terry Shannon
Cllr. Terry Shannon
Cathaoirleach

Date: 10/11/2023





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AGENDA

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 8th September 2023.
2. Matters Arising.
3. Revision of Standing Orders – for discussion and approval.
4. Report on Joint SPA Members Workshop, June 2nd – for approval.
5. Update on RSES Workplan.
6. Presentation on Project Ireland 2040 - Prospects 2023/2024: Ireland's Major Infrastructure Project Pipeline – for information.
7. Update on ERDF Regional Programme.
8. Any Other Business.
9. Date of Next Meeting.



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