



# Southern Regional Assembly

9<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 12:00pm

Assembly House, Waterford and via MS Teams

## Minutes

**Presiding:** Cllr. Oliver Walsh, Cathaoirleach.

**Present:** Cllr. Robert Beasley, Cllr. Dan Boyle, Cllr. Joe Carroll, Cllr. Conor D McGuinness, Cllr. Sheila O'Callaghan, Cllr. Michael O'Shea and Cllr. Terry Shannon.

**Remote Attendance via MS Teams:** Cllr. Maura Bell, Cllr. Pip Breen, Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. Michael Collins, Cllr. Noel Coonan, Cllr. Séamus Cosáí Fitzgerald, Cllr. Tom Cronin, Cllr. Gillian Coughlan, Cllr. Frankie Daly, Cllr. Garret Kelleher, Cllr. PJ Kelly, Cllr. Thomas Kinsella, Cllr. Kieran McCarthy, Cllr. Andrew McGuinness, Cllr. Gerard Murphy, Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien, Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan, Cllr. Thomas Phelan, Cllr. Sean O'Connor, Cllr. Ken Murnane and Cllr. John Sheahan.

**Apologies:** Cllr. Deirdre Forde and Cllr. Michael Murphy.

**Officials Present:** David Kelly, Enda Hogan, Dominic Walsh, Sharon Murray, Karen Coughlan, Marie Harnett, Breda Curran, Samantha Richardson, Maria Murphy, Omer Sunguroglu, Anna Higgins and Claire Breen.

**Officials Remote Attendance via MS Teams:** Kevin Lynch, Robert Fennelly, Brigh Ryan, Michael Buckley, Sarah Davoren, Edel Hunt, Elayne McDonnell, Rebecca Walsh, Catherine Connaughton and Colm Walsh.

**External Presenters Present:** Helen Leahy – Head of Regional Policy, IBEC.

**External Attendees Present:** Senthil Ramasamay – MCI Placement Programme and Rachel Delaney – UCC MA Course Public Policy & Diplomacy.

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

### 1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May, proposed by Cllr. O' Shea and seconded by Cllr. Carroll.

### 2. Matters Arising

None.

### 3. EU Competitiveness Index – Helen Leahy, Head of Regional Policy, IBEC

David Kelly introduced Helen Leahy from IBEC to give a presentation on the EU Competitiveness Index, and the role of IBEC in the Southern Region.

A discussion followed with contributions from Cllr. Boyle, Cllr. O' Callaghan, Cllr. Carroll, Cllr. McGuinness, Cllr. Kinsella, Cllr. Murphy, and Cllr. Kelleher.

Points addressed included:

- Capacity constraints in relation to Infrastructure, Housing, Public Services and Education
- Investment in SETU driving innovation and connectivity in the Southern Region
- Increasing of activities in low scoring Regions, e.g., Work from Home initiatives, and enticing larger Businesses to invest these areas

David Kelly highlighted the link between the lack of investment in Lifelong Learning in the Southern Region, and how the 'Towards a Learning Region' report is looking to address this deficit. One key development is that an application has been made for Waterford City to become part of the UNESCO Global Network of Learning Cities.

#### **4. Adoption of the Annual Financial Statement 2022**

The Annual Financial Statement 2022 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. McGuinness and seconded by Cllr. Beasley.

David Kelly thanked Sharon Murray and the Finance team for their work in putting the accounts together.

#### **5. Adoption of the Annual Report 2022**

The Annual Report 2022 was adopted on the proposal of Cllr. Carroll and seconded by Cllr. O'Callaghan.

Marie Harnett gave a presentation on the Annual Report 2022, and its highlights. David Kelly said the annual report illustrates the wide array of work the Assembly is delivering on and thanked the team and Members for their input.

#### **6. Regional Planning Update Feedback from Members Workshop on June 2<sup>nd</sup>**

David Kelly gave an update on the SPA Members Workshop held in Great National Hotel, Ballykisteen, Limerick Junction, Co. Tipperary on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2023. He noted that the event was well attended by members and by representatives from the Department of Housing Local Government & Heritage and representatives from academia.

A discussion followed with topics raised by Cllr. Kelleher, Cllr. Phelan, Cllr. Sheila O' Callaghan, Cllr. Alan O' Callaghan, Cllr. Shannon, Cllr. PJ Kelly, & Cllr. Carroll. Topics raised included:

- Consideration of Gender Balance to the composition of the Assembly
- Induction to Assembly for New Members
- When the Assembly is advertising in local media, consider naming the Assembly Members in that locality – this would raise profile of their work on behalf of the region with local constituents.
- Consideration of an Annual Members Workshop

#### **7. Any Other Business**

Cllr. Carroll raised an issue in relation to the disposal of IDA lands in Skibbereen and which he would be raising at the next County Council meeting.

In addition, Cllr. Carroll said that there should be more in-person attendees for Assembly meetings and for the Assembly should use Cork Airport for flights to Europe.

Cllr. McGuinness raised two topics, firstly the Retained Firefighters strike and how that affects local councils and work life balance of the firefighters. Secondly to call for a referendum to be held

regarding to the ownership of Uisce Éireann, and that he will be bringing a motion to the next Assembly meeting.

Kevin Lynch gave an update on Regional Planning and these included:

- The Draft Newcastle West Local Area Plan has been circulated to Members
- On Monday 12<sup>th</sup> June a Draft of the submission to the Mid-Term Review of Regional Airports Programme will be circulated to members

**8. Date of Next Meeting**

Friday, 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 Annual & Ordinary Meetings in-person and online.

Signed: Oliver Walsh  
Cllr. Oliver Walsh  
Cathaoirleach

Date: 14/7/23



# AGENDA

## 9<sup>th</sup> June 2023

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2023
2. Matters Arising
3. EU Competitiveness Index – Helen Leahy, Head of Regional Policy, IBEC
4. Adoption of the Annual Financial Statement 2022
5. Adoption of the Annual Report 2022
6. Feedback from Members Workshop on June 2nd
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of Next Meeting