

South-East Regional Authority
Údarás Réigiúnach an Oir-Dheiscirt

Minutes of the April monthly meeting of the South-East Regional Authority held at County Hall, Carlow on Monday, 27th April, 2009 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, Cathaoirleach, presided.

Also Present: Cllr. L. Allen, Cllr. M. Anglim, Cllr. T. Breathnach, Cllr. J. Brennan, Cllr. M. Brett, Cllr. P. Codd, Cllr. D. Geoghegan, Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J. Kavanagh, Cllr. T. Kinsella, Cllr. M. Murphy, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. D. MacPartlin, Cllr. P. Norris, Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, Cllr. M. O'Halloran, Cllr. W. Paton, Cllr. M. Roche, Cllr. D. Walsh.

In Attendance: Mr. T. Byrne, Director
Mr. M. Moroney, Asst. Director
Ms. S. Thompson, Research & Policy Officer
Ms. A. Sheehan, Office Manager.

Apologies: Mr. E. O'Connor, Designated County Manager,
Cllr. B. Coffey, Cllr. J. Crowe, Cllr. S. Doyle, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. C. Phelan, Cllr. T. Wright.

Before the meeting commenced, votes of sympathy were passed with the families of Mr. Michael Dee, Regional Development Executive with Enterprise Ireland and Mr. Nicky Fewer, Chairman of South-East Regional Airport. The Cathaoirleach acknowledged the immense contribution made by both men to the region over the years in their respective fields. A minute's silence was held as a mark of respect.

Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. M. Roche, seconded by Cllr. M. O'Halloran, the minutes of the March monthly meeting, copy of which had been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Matters Arising

The members stated that the late Mr. Nicky Fewer had been quite ill during the Waterford Glass dispute and wished to acknowledge that he would have been very pro-active in the dispute had he been in full health.

Gateway Development Index

Mr. Stephen Blair, Director, Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly, attended the meeting and made a presentation to the members on the '*Gateway Development Index 2009*'. He outlined his presentation under the following headings:

- Background to the Gateway Development Index (GDI)
- NSS Monitoring Framework
- Objectives of the GDI
- Management/Timing of the GDI
- Basic Parameters for the GDI
- Development of the GDI
- Definition of Gateway Areas
- Requirement of Indicators/GDI Domains
- Interpretation of GDI Findings
- Graphs indicating performance of each Gateway compared to national average
- GDI Perception Study
- Summary of Findings
- Recommendations for GDI.

Mr. Blair then responded to questions and comments from the members including the following:

- The need to develop the Hubs as well as the Gateways in the region
- Essential road infrastructure and the need for a University in order to improve the performance of the region
- The effects of the current economic climate on gateways/hubs
- Is the gateway/hub concept proven to improve regional development?
- Has the NSS been undermined by post 2002 events, e.g. decentralisation, current economic climate etc.?
- Main reason for poor infrastructure due to lack of Government funding
- GDI is a great tool to prove that Waterford needs investment to improve the South-East as a region
- GDI must now be used to lobby for investment, employment etc.

Mr. Blair stated that the purpose of this report is to provide the findings and it is up to the policy makers to use these findings. He said that strong co-operation and collaboration is now needed between the local authorities in the region.

The Cathaoirleach expressed disappointment with the performance of Waterford as a Gateway. Waterford scored a GDI of 3.7 compared with the national average of 5, with weaknesses existing across all domains.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Blair for his very informative presentation.

County Incomes and Regional GDP 2006

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on County Incomes and Regional GDP 2006, recently published by the CSO. The summary report outlined the main points of the full report and highlighted County Incomes and GDP for the South-East region.

South-East Region Bioenergy Implementation Plan 2008-1013

The members noted details of the South-East Region Bioenergy Implementation Plan for the Annual Implementation Report 2008. The Plan is designed to make the South-East the leading Irish region in the use and promotion of bioenergy over the coming years. The objectives of the plan are to provide a structured framework for all stakeholders in the region to utilise for the coherent development and progress in the area of bioenergy, to gather data in relation to the scope and potential for bioenergy development in the region based on the availability of resources and technology and to identify and reduce barriers to the development of bioenergy in the region.

The Cathaoirleach complimented the Director and staff of the Authority on the implementation work being carried out and the 2008 Report.

EU White Paper on Adapting to Climate Change

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on the '*EU White Paper on Adapting to Climate Change*', recently published by the European Commission. The report outlined the different types of adaptation measures identified in the White Paper, which can be taken at national or local level. Many of these actions will need to be taken at local level so that they match the different local conditions that exist in different areas, and because they closely relate to the range of local government services and responsibilities.

Revised Nitrates Regulations

The members noted details of a report on '*Revised Nitrates Regulations*', recently published by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government. The report outlined the following main new features incorporated in the regulations:

- Strengthened enforcement powers for local authorities
- Enhanced cross-reporting arrangements between local authorities and the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food

- Requirements for improved farmyard management
- Provisions relating to making application to the Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food for a derogation
- Temporary exemption to allow an extension of time for establishment of green cover following ploughing competitions.

'Regions 2020 : An Assessment of Future Challenges for EU Regions'

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated on *'Regions 2020 : An Assessment of Future Challenges for EU Regions'*, recently issued by the European Commission's Directorate-General for Regional Policy. The report provides a prospective analysis of the likely regional impact of four of the biggest challenges facing Europe, i.e. globalisation, demographic change, climate change and energy supply. The main findings of the report will feed into the reflection process on the future of European Cohesion Policy.

Any Other Matters

The Cathaoirleach announced that the next meeting of the Authority will take place at 12 noon on Monday 25th June at Kilkenny County Council, following the meeting of the Regional Planning Guidelines Steering Committee at 10.00 a.m.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Síniú: _____

Ceadaíthe: _____

Dáta: _____

Dáta: _____