

**South-East Regional Authority**  
*Údarás Réigiúnach an Oir-Dheiscirt*

**Minutes of the January monthly meeting of the South-East Regional Authority held at the County Civic Offices, Dungarvan, on Monday, 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2005 at 2.30 p.m.**

**Present:** Cllr. S. Ryan, Cathaoirleach, presided.

**Also Present:** Cllr. L. Allen, Cllr. M. Anglim, Cllr. L. Brazil, Cllr. T. Breathnach, Cllr. J. Brennan, Cllr. P. Codd, Cllr. P. Coffey, Cllr. S. Connick, Cllr. J. Crowe, Cllr. M. D'Arcy, Cllr. S. Doyle, Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. D. Geoghegan, Cllr. T. Howlin, Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J. Kavanagh, Cllr. D. Landy, Cllr. C. Long, Cllr. M. Maguire, Cllr. T. Maher, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. D. McPartlin, Cllr. P. Norris, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, Cllr. L. O'Neill, Cllr. W. Paton, Cllr. C. Phelan-Holden, Cllr. M. Roche, Cllr. J. Tobin, Cllr. D. Walsh, Cllr. T. Wright.

**In Attendance:** Mr. T. Byrne, Director  
Mr. M. Moroney, European Officer  
Ms. A. Sheehan, Office Manager  
Mr. M. Malone, Designated County Manager.

**Apologies:** Cllr. T. Kinsella, Cllr. M. O'Halloran.

**Confirmation of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr. J. Tobin, seconded by Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, the minutes of the November monthly meeting, copy of which had been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

**Matters Arising**

- The members asked why the towns of Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey in Co. Wexford were not included in Phase II of the Regional Broadband Programme. The Director informed them that 90 towns were listed in the Programme by the DCMNR, 9 of which were in the South-East Region. On the proposal of Cllr. M. D'Arcy, seconded by Cllr. D. McPartlin, the following resolution was passed unanimously by the Authority:

“That we, the South-East Regional Authority affirm our support for the inclusion of Enniscorthy, New Ross and Gorey in the Regional Broadband Programme – Phase II and we hereby call on the Minister for Communications, Marine & Natural Resources to include these three towns in the list of approved towns under the Programme”.

- The members asked when broadband networks would be extended to smaller towns. The Director informed them that the 3<sup>rd</sup> call for the County and Group Broadband Scheme was imminent and urged all smaller communities to apply for the scheme in order to avail of the funding being made available.
- The members enquired about the uptake of broadband in the region. The Director informed them that it was quite slow to date, but that e-Net, the Management Services Entity appointed by government, has just started a major promotion of the built networks.

### **Third Level Education in the South-East Region**

The members held a lengthy discussion on third level education in the South-East Region. The following were the main points of the discussion:

- The Director informed the members that he, the Designated County Manager and the previous Cathaoirleach, Cllr. J. Brennan, had held various meetings with the Directors of both Waterford IT and IT Carlow and the Chairman of IT Carlow. Following these meetings, the South-East Regional Authority offered to facilitate/coordinate a Discussion Forum comprising of representation from the 3 Institutes in the region to discuss all the issues and concerns relating to the establishment of a university for the South-East
- The Designated County Manager reported on his discussions with the Director of WIT and the Director gave a detailed account of the recent meeting with the Chair and Director of IT Carlow and, in particular, the views and concerns expressed by the latter on developments relating to the issue of a university of the South-East
- It was stated that Waterford IT intends to apply as a single unit for upgrading to University status

- IT Carlow is not in favour of Waterford IT applying in isolation and are more in favour of a multi-campus approach with equal status for both colleges
- It was then proposed by Cllr. S. Ryan and seconded by Cllr. D. McPartlin “That the South-East Regional Authority reaffirms its commitment to the provision of a University of the South-East and calls for a University of the South-East to be established at Waterford with links to existing third-level facilities in Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and Tipperary”
- The Carlow Councillors expressed disappointment that round table discussions did not take place between the ITs and said that they could not support the motion
- The Designated County Manager informed the members that efforts had been made with the ITs to hold round-table discussions, but without success. He indicated that Waterford IT felt that an individual application would be more successful in achieving university status and that joint discussions between the ITs is not an option at present
- The Cathaoirleach stressed that a university in the South-East Region would contribute to the socio-economic performance of the region and that the Authority must be united on this issue. He stated that as no application for upgrading had been made by IT Carlow, Waterford is the obvious choice for the university as it is 4 times bigger than Carlow
- At this stage of the meeting, the Cathaoirleach put the motion and a vote of the members present resulted were as follows:

**For the motion:** Cllr. L. Allen, Cllr. M. Anglim, Cllr. L. Brazil, Cllr. T. Breachnach, Cllr. J. Brennan, Cllr. P. Codd, Cllr. P. Coffey, Cllr. S. Connick, Cllr. J. Crowe, Cllr. M. D’Arcy, Cllr. S. Doyle, Cllr. J. Fitzgerald, Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. D. Geoghegan, Cllr. D. Landy, Cllr. C. Long, Cllr. M. Maguire, Cllr. T. Maher, Cllr. D. McPartlin, Cllr. P. Norris, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. P. O’Callaghan, Cllr. L. O’Neill, Cllr. C. Phelan-Holden, Cllr. M. Roche, Cllr. S. Ryan, Cllr. J. Tobin, Cllr. D. Walsh, Cllr. T. Wright. **(29)**

**Against the motion:** Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J. Kavangh, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. W. Paton. **(4)**

The Cathaoirleach declared the motion carried and thanked the members for their cooperation and participation in the debate on what was a very difficult issue for the Authority.

### **Programme of Work in respect of year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006**

The Director outlined the main elements of the draft Programme of Work in respect of year ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006, copy of which had been circulated. He said it incorporates the current and future activities of the Authority for the coming year.

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Geoghegan, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, the Programme of Work was approved and adopted by the Authority.

### **Consultation process for a National Development Plan 2007-2013**

The Director informed the members that the government has decided to prepare a National Development Plan (NDP) for the period 2007 - 2013 and that the Department of Finance (DoF) has been charged with coordinating its preparation. He informed them that as part of the extensive consultation process, all Regional Authorities have been invited to make a submission on the preparation of the new NDP. This process is well under way, and all social partners, regional bodies and other concerned interested groups within the region have been invited to make submissions. The objective of the plan is to maintain competitiveness as a country and to promote balanced regional development. The closing date for receipt of submissions to the DoF is 10<sup>th</sup> March 2006, so the submission should be finalised for the consideration and approval of the Authority at their February meeting.

The members criticized the amount spent in the previous NDP in the South-East and stated that it had failed to deliver within the region. They said that as funds allocated for the region may be lower in the new NDP, all monies should be spent wisely. They suggested a workshop to discuss the new NDP and combine the collective wisdom of the Authority. The Director suggested and it was agreed that this item be put on the agenda for the February meeting of the Authority.

### **National Rural Development Strategy and Programme 2007-2013**

The European Officer informed the members that following the agreement at EU level of the Strategic Guidelines for Rural Development, the Government must now prepare a National Strategy and Programme of Measures. A consultation phase has now commenced and the Authority has been invited to make a submission. The closing date for receipt of submissions is 27<sup>th</sup> January and the European Officer requested that as the timescale is so short, any comments or

observations regarding this submission should be made to the staff of the Authority by telephone or e-mail without delay.

The members stated that this was a hugely important issue for the region and that the deadline was too tight. They suggested that an extension be requested from the Department. They requested that a draft of the submission be circulated to the members for information and comment before the end of the week.

The members also discussed the following concerns:

- Low rate of state tree planting
- Tourism in rural areas
- Amount of nitrates permitted to be used
- Ireland's water quality
- Rural development decisions being made in Brussels and not Ireland
- Government policies should be rural-proofed.

#### **EU Committee of the Regions (CoR) - Update on new four year mandate**

The members noted the EU CoR Update on the new four-year mandate, copy of which had been circulated. The Director informed the members that the Authority now had 2 members on the CoR - Cllr. M. Fitzgerald and Cllr. D. Landy. Cllr. M. Fitzgerald informed the members that this was his first opportunity to start a new mandate. He said that he would represent his local and regional authority, which would be of great value to the authorities. He informed them that the South-East was the only region in Ireland to have two representatives on the CoR, and congratulated Cllr. Landy on his appointment.

Cllr. D. Landy thanked the members and told them that it was a great honour for him to serve on the CoR. He said that he had looked at proposals for change in the CoR and saw an opportunity for issues of change to be brought forward.

The Cathaoirleach congratulated both Councillors on their membership of the CoR.

#### **End-of-Year Statements issued by IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland**

The members noted details of summary reports, copies of which had been circulated, on End-of-Year Statements issued by IDA Ireland and Enterprise Ireland. The reports outlined the statement highlights of both agencies.

The members requested a breakdown of figures for the South-East in relation to the IDA statement.

**End-of-Year Review and outlook for 2006 published by Fáilte Ireland**

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on End-of-Year Review and outlook for 2006 published by Fáilte Ireland.

The summary report outlined the highlights from the main report which were all very positive for the Irish tourism industry.

The Cathaoirleach suggested that this item be put on the agenda of a future Authority meeting.

**Correspondence**

- The Director informed the members that an invitation had been issued to the Cathaoirleach and Director to attend the 'ENCORE' Conference of Regional Ministers of the Environment in Are (Sweden) in June 2006. It was proposed by Cllr. M. D'Arcy and seconded by Cllr. P. Codd and unanimously agreed that this Conference be attended.

**Any Other Matters**

- The members expressed concerns about the payment of expenses to public representatives for attendance at Regional Drug Task Force meetings. They suggested that this issue be raised again with the Minister for Community, Rural & Gaeltacht Affairs. They also requested that a letter of clarification in relation to this matter be circulated to all members of the Regional Drug Task Force from the relevant Department.
- The Director informed the members that an invitation had been received from the Commission for Energy Regulation to make a submission on the proposal on the Revised Gas Connections Policy. He said that the Authority intends to make a submission on this issue reflecting the views and concerns expressed by Authority members at recent meetings.

Sínte: \_\_\_\_\_

Ceadaithe: \_\_\_\_\_

Dáta: \_\_\_\_\_

Dáta: \_\_\_\_\_