

South-East Regional Authority
Údarás Réigiúnach an Oir-Dheiscirt

**Minutes of the July monthly meeting of the South-East Regional Authority
held at the Council Chamber, County Civic Offices, Dungarvan, on Monday,
24th July 2006 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. J. Crowe, Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. T. Howlin, Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J. Kavanagh, Cllr. T. Kinsella, Cllr. D. Landy, Cllr. C. Long, Cllr. M. Maguire, Cllr. T. Maher, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. P. Norris, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, Cllr. M. O'Halloran, Cllr. W. Paton, Cllr. C. Phelan, Cllr. M. Roche, Cllr. D. Walsh.

In Attendance: Mr. T. Byrne, Director
Mr. M. Moroney, European Officer
Ms. S. Thompson, Regional Broadband Coordinator
Ms. A. Sheehan, Office Manager
Mr. M. Malone, Designated County Manager.

Apologies: Cllr. S. Connick, Cllr. M. D'Arcy, Cllr. S. Doyle, Cllr. D. Geoghegan, Cllr. D. MacPartlin, Cllr. L. O'Neill, Cllr. J. Tobin, Cllr. T. Wright.

Address by Outgoing Cathaoirleach

The Cathaoirleach began by welcoming everyone to his final meeting as Cathaoirleach. He congratulated the members of the Authority who have recently been elected as Mayors/Cathaoirligh of their local authorities:

- Cllr. L. O'Neill - Mayor, Waterford City Council
- Cllr. T. Wright - Mayor, Dungarvan Town Council
- Cllr. D. Landy - Mayor, Carrick-on-Suir Town Council
- Cllr. P. Codd - Cathaoirleach, Wexford County Council

He said it was a great honour to serve as Cathaoirleach of the Authority for the past 12 months during which time the Authority continued to work successfully to advance the region's development needs and priorities. He outlined the following projects and activities in which the Authority continues to be involved:

- 'SERPANT' : South-East Broadband Project – installation of optic fibre Metropolitan Area Networks in Waterford, Kilkenny, Carlow, Clonmel, Wexford and Dungarvan – now completed.
- Construction of Broadband Networks in 9 other towns – Bagenalstown, Tullow, Thomastown, Tramore, Dunmore East, Cahir, Cashel, Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary – now at design stage, ready for tender by Autumn.
- Promotion of the County & Group Broadband Scheme to local communities throughout the region
- 'SEISS' : South-East Information Society Strategy and Action Plan
- Supporting the case for the establishment of a university in the South-East Region
- Submission to the Department of Finance on the preparation of the NDP 2007-2013
- Promotion of renewable/bio-energy initiatives
- 'E-ByGov' Project which was officially launched by Mr. Dick Roche, T.D., Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government on 13th July 2006. The project involved the development of an on-line customer payment and receipts system for the 17 local authorities in the South-East Region in partnership with the local authorities and the Local Government Computer Services Board
- Regional Passenger Transport Strategy
- 'SEEDS' : South-East Employment Development Strategy
- Regional Planning Guidelines incorporating a Regional Socio-economic Strategy
- Participated in the work of the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly, the EU Committee of the Regions, the Regional Drugs Task Force and other bodies

- Promoted issues of regional importance, such as:
 - the region's transport infrastructure (road, rail, ports)
 - the South-East Regional Airport
 - Radiation Oncology Services
 - Industry, enterprise and regional development.

The Cathaoirleach expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Leas-chathaoirleach, Cllr. Ted Howlin and to his fellow members of the Authority, to the Designated County Manager, Mr. Michael Malone, to the Director, Mr. Tom Byrne and to the Staff for all their help and cooperation during his term as Cathaoirleach.

Many members expressed their thanks to the Cathaoirleach and complimented him on the manner in which he discharged the role of the office of Cathaoirleach over the past year.

Election of Cathaoirleach

Nominations were invited for the position of Cathaoirleach of the Authority for the ensuing year.

Cllr. Paudie Coffey was proposed by Cllr. M. Fitzgerald and seconded by Cllr. M. O'Halloran.

As there were no other nominations, Cllr. Paudie Coffey was declared elected as Cathaoirleach of the South-East Regional Authority for the ensuing year. He then took the chair.

Cllr. Coffey expressed his thanks and appreciation to his proposer, seconder and the members for electing him to the office of Cathaoirleach. He said it was an honour to be elected as Cathaoirleach. He thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach for his contribution over the past year.

The new Cathaoirleach spoke of the year ahead and the challenges facing the Authority and stated that his priorities for the region for the forthcoming year would include:

- Public Radiotherapy Services at Waterford Regional Hospital
- University Status for Waterford Institute of Technology
- Provision of essential public infrastructure
- Waste Management Infrastructure
- Public Transport facilities

- Attraction of inward investment for industrial and commercial development
- Lack of recreational facilities in our communities
- The urgent needs and deficiencies in the Region's infrastructure.

He stated that he looked forward to working with the members and the staff of the Authority to advance these and other issues of importance to the development of the region over the coming year.

Election of Leas-chathaoirleach

Nominations were invited by the Cathaoirleach for the position of Leas-chathaoirleach of the Authority for the ensuing year.

Cllr. Mary O'Halloran was proposed by Cllr. C.Phelan and seconded by Cllr. T. Maher. As there were no other nominations, Cllr. O'Halloran was declared elected.

Cllr. O'Halloran thanked her proposer and seconder and stated that she looked forward to working with the Cathaoirleach and members of the Authority for the ensuing year.

Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Howlin, seconded by Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, the minutes of the July monthly meeting, copy of which had been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Fáilte Ireland Regional Tourism Development Board

The Director informed the members that 2 nominations were required for representation on the Fáilte Ireland Regional Tourism Development Board. As two County Managers, Mr. M. Malone and Mr. E. Breen, had already been nominated to the Board, he suggested that in making nominations an effort be made to achieve the maximum geographical spread in terms of the appointments. The following members were nominated by the Authority:

Cllr. D. Landy - Proposed by Cllr. S. Ryan, seconded by Cllr. T. Howlin
 Cllr. T. Maher - Proposed by Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, seconded by Cllr. C. Phelan.

Both nominees thanked their proposers and seconders. The members requested that the interests of all areas in the region be equally represented on the Board by the nominees.

The Cathaoirleach requested that regular reports be made to the Authority and informed the members that nominations to the Board would alternate on a two-yearly basis.

Forfás Annual Report 2005

The members noted summary details of the recently published Forfás Annual Report 2005, copy of which had been circulated. The summary report outlined the main highlights from the Annual Report.

Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on Revised Wind Energy Development Guidelines for Planning Authorities that had been prepared by the Department of the Environment, Heritage & Local Government. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide advice to planning authorities on planning for wind energy through the development plan process and in determining applications for planning permission. A discussion followed on the matter, with the members voicing the following concerns:

- Problems associated with high wind turbines
- The need for alternative sources of energy
- The need for wind energy to be developed in an efficient and organised manner
- The need for a national policy on wind energy
- Concern over escalating ESB and Bord Gáis prices.

The Designated County Manager informed the members that he welcomed the guidelines. He stated that this is an important regional issue and that a similar approach/strategy must be shared by all constituent local authorities.

The Director informed the members that the Authority has been approved by Sustainable Energy Ireland for a grant to prepare a Regional Bio-energy Strategy, the timescale for which is approximately nine months.

The members requested that a letter issue to both Bord Gáis and ESB expressing the Authority's concern over price increases. They also requested that the approach of each constituent local authority to incorporation of the guidelines into Development Plans be ascertained.

Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2005

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on the Annual Housing Statistics Bulletin 2005. The report outlined the highlights of the Bulletin and listed tables on various aspects of the provision of housing in the South-East Region.

LIFE + Programme

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on the LIFE + Programme (2007-2013). This programme will complement the horizontal financial instruments (ERDF, ESF, Cohesion Fund, European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development, the CAP, European Fisheries Fund and RFP7). It will succeed the LIFE Programme 2000-2006.

Any Other Matters

- Cllr. D. Walsh informed the members that there are still places available at the Craft Fair in Nantes, France to be held on 2nd – 9th December 2006. The Director informed the members that all relevant interested bodies would be notified by the Authority.
- The members expressed concern over the non-attendance of the media at Authority meetings. The Director and Cathaoirleach will discuss this issue.
- The members requested that drinking water be provided at all Authority meetings.
- The Cathaoirleach thanked everyone for attending the meeting and extended an invitation to join him for refreshments after the meeting.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Sínithe: _____

Ceadaithe: _____

Dáta: _____

Dáta: _____