

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 Hall, Kilkenny, on Monday, 23rd July 2007
at 2.30 p.m.**

Present: Cllr. P. Coffey, Cathaoirleach, presided.

Also Present: Cllr. M. Anglim, Cllr. L. Brazil, Cllr. T. Breathnach,
Cllr. J. Brennan, Cllr. P. Codd, Cllr. J. Crowe, Cllr. S.
Doyle, Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick Cllr. D.
Geoghegan, Cllr. T. Howlin, Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J.
Kavanagh, Cllr. T. Kinsella, Cllr. C. Long, Cllr. T. Maher,
Cllr. M. Murphy, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. D. MacPartlin, Cllr.
P. Norris, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. L. O'Brien, Cllr. P. O'Callaghan,
Cllr. M. O'Halloran, Cllr. L. O'Neill, Cllr. W. Paton, Cllr. C.
Phelan, Cllr. M. Roche, Cllr. J. Tobin, Cllr. D. Walsh.

In Attendance: Mr. T. Byrne, Director
Mr. M. Moroney, European Officer
Ms. B. Maher, Research & Projects Executive
Ms. A. Sheehan, Office Manager
Mr. E. O'Connor, Designated County Manager.

Apologies: Cllr. L. Allen.

Address by Outgoing Cathaoirleach

Before the meeting commenced, the following votes of sympathy were passed:

- With Cllr. J. Tobin and his wife on the death of their niece
- With Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick on the death of his cousin
- With James McGarry, Kilkenny Hurler, on the death of his wife in a traffic accident.

A minute of silence was observed as a mark of respect.

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

- Cllr. M. O'Halloran - Mayor, Waterford City Council
- Cllr. T. Maher - Cathaoirleach, Kilkenny Co. Council
- Cllr. D. Geoghegan - Mayor, Dungarvan Town Council
- Cllr. S. Doyle - Mayor, Enniscorthy Town Council.

He also congratulated Cllr. L. O'Neill and Cllr. P. Codd for their excellent work as Mayor of Waterford City and Cathaoirleach of 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 and continued to be a strong voice for the South-East. He outlined the following projects and activities in which the Authority continues to be involved:

- 'SERB-II': South-East Broadband Phase II Project – Construction of Broadband Networks in 9 towns – Bagenalstown, Tullow, Thomastown, Tramore, Dunmore East, Cahir, Cashel, Carrick-on-Suir and Tipperary
- Supporting and promoting 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 and being part of the NDP monitoring arrangements until 2013
- Implementing the Regional Planning Guidelines
- Promotion of renewable/bio-energy initiatives through preparation of a Bioenergy Implementation Plan for the South-East Region – currently in draft form; to be completed and published in the Autumn
- Spearheading the Region's 'Spirit of Enterprise' Initiative
- Study on the Movement of Freight in the South-East
- Participated in the work of the Southern & Eastern Regional Assembly, the EU Committee of the Regions and other bodies
- Promotion of issues of regional importance, such as:
 - the region's transport infrastructure (road, rail, ports)
 - the South-East Regional Airport
 - Radiation Oncology & Neurology Services
 - Industry, enterprise and regional development.

He stated that the region is facing many challenges, and the Regional Authority has a key role in providing the leadership to ensure that the interests, needs and priorities of the South-East are addressed.

He also expressed his thanks and appreciation to the Leas-chathaoirleach, Cllr. Mary O'Halloran, and to his fellow members of the Authority, to the Designated County Manager, Ned O'Connor, (also to Michael Malone who preceded him in the role), to the Director, 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. P. O'Callaghan was proposed by Cllr. T. Howlin and seconded by Cllr. T. Maher.

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

Cllr. O'Callaghan 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 and thanked the outgoing Cathaoirleach for his contribution to the Authority 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:

- University Status for Waterford Institute of Technology
- Implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines
- Waste Management Infrastructure
- Promotion of broadband infrastructure in the region
- 'Transport 21' issues with emphasis on the N.11 and N.24
- Development of access to the South-East Regional Airport
- Development of Waterford Estuary
- Promotion of health and education in the region.

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. W. Paton was proposed by Cllr. D. Hurley and seconded by Cllr. J. Crowe. As there were no other nominations, Cllr. Paton was declared elected.

Cllr. Paton thanked his proposer and seconder and stated that he looked forward to working with the Cathaoirleach and members of the Authority for the ensuing year.

Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. P. Codd, seconded by Cllr. D. Geoghegan, the minutes of the June monthly meeting, copy of which had been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Presentation on Neurology Services in the South-East

Ms. Patricia O'Sullivan, General Manager, Waterford Regional Hospital attended the meeting and made a presentation to the members. In her presentation she outlined the following:

- The national deficit of neurology services was identified in the Comhairle na nOspidéal report on Neurology Services in 1991 and subsequently in the Comhairle Report on Neurology Services in 2003
- Recommendations from both reports identified the need to reform the existing structures to facilitate the provision of neurology services close to the patient and increase ease of access to the service
- The establishment of Neurology Services at Waterford Regional Hospital was identified as a 'priority development' with an initial appointment of two Consultant Neurologist posts rising to four in the long-term
- A proposal for the establishment of services at Waterford Regional Hospital was submitted to the NHO in 2005 which provided for two Consultant Neurologists and supporting staff at Waterford Regional Hospital with links to Cork University Hospital
- €400k was provided to the HSE South-East in 2006 and the following four posts were identified for the service:
 - Consultant Neurologist
 - Clinical Nurse Specialist
 - Senior Occupational Therapist
 - Clerical Officer.
- From 23rd July 2007, Dr. Paul Crowley will take up the post of Consultant Neurologist (temporary) in Waterford Regional Hospital. The permanent post was advertised in April 2007
- An estimated 55,000 people in the South-East are affected by neurological conditions and a breakdown of those affected within the area was provided
- The HSE South-East submission for the 2008 Estimates included the provision for further development of neurology services. However, this service will only be accommodated within the existing bed stock and outpatient facilities.

Ms. O'Sullivan then responded to questions and comments from the members including the following:

- Concern over appointment of 2nd Consultant in the region
- The position regarding countrywide Bed Management Policy on mixing sexes within the wards
- The position regarding Contract Cleaners continuing to clean hospitals
- Provision of proper smoking areas within hospitals
- Concern regarding the frequency of Neurology Reports
- Concern regarding the efficiency of in-patient service
- Concern regarding the provision of neurology services without adequate beds
- Plans to roll out breast-check in the South-East Region
- Concern regarding restriction of hospital visiting times.

The members requested the following from Ms. O'Sullivan:

- That she attend a meeting of the Authority on an annual basis in order to keep members updated on all progress within the HSE South-East
- That she arrange points of contact for public representatives with the HSE in order to improve communications. Ms. O'Sullivan agreed that this would be mutually beneficial to all and that she would contact the Authority regarding this issue.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Ms. O'Sullivan for attending the meeting and for her very interesting and informative presentation.

IDA Annual Report 2006

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on the IDA Annual Report 2006. The summary report outlined the main highlights of the Annual Report and also the impact that Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) has had on Ireland's growth and prosperity.

The members expressed concern at the contents of the report and requested that the Authority write to the IDA and Enterprise Ireland to outline their concerns regarding job losses in the South-East Region and to enquire if it was possible to conduct a survey in the manufacturing and services sectors to anticipate job losses in the future within the region.

'Environment in Focus 2006 – Environmental Indicators for Ireland'

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on '*Environment in Focus 2006 – Environmental Indicators for Ireland*'. This report brings together the most recent information on the quality of Ireland's environment and the underlying causes of environmental damage.

Forfás Annual Report 2006

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on the Forfás Annual Report 2006. The summary report outlined the main highlight of the Annual Report and stated that Forfás collects and analyses a range of data from the following sources:

- Expenditure by Agency-Supported Firms
- Corporation Tax Payments
- Employment
- Expenditure on Research & Development
- Business Expenditure on Research & Development
- Research & Development in the Higher Education Sector
- Government Expenditure on Research & Development.

Correspondence

1. Letter from the Department of Communications, Energy & Natural Resources regarding Paper submitted by the Authority on 'Broadband in the South-East Region'.
2. Letter from the Department of Finance requesting that the Authority nominate a representative to the Central Monitoring Committee for the NDP 2007-2013. The Cathaoirleach, Cllr. P. O'Callaghan was proposed by Cllr. T. Maher and seconded by Cllr. M. O'Halloran and unanimously agreed by the members.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Sínithe: _____ Ceadaithe: _____

Dáta: _____ Dáta: _____