

South-East Regional Authority
Údarás Réigiúnach an Oir-Dheiscirt

Minutes of the March monthly meeting of the South-East Regional Authority held at County Hall, Kilkenny, on Monday, 31st March 2008 at 2.30 p.m.

Present: Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, Cathaoirleach, presided.

Also Present: Cllr. L. Allen, Cllr. M. Anglim, Cllr. L. Brazil, Cllr. T. Breathnach, Cllr. J. Brennan, Cllr. P. Codd, Cllr. J. Crowe, Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, Cllr. D. Geoghegan, Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J. Kavanagh, Cllr. T. Kinsella, Cllr. D. Landy, Cllr. C. Long, Cllr. M. Maguire, Cllr. T. Maher, Cllr. M. Murphy, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. D. MacPartlin, Cllr. P. Norris, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. L. O'Neill, Cllr. W. Paton, Cllr. C. Phelan, Cllr. J. Tobin, Cllr. T. Wright.

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

Apologies: Cllr. B. Coffey, Cllr. M. O'Halloran
Mr. E. O'Connor, Designated County Manager.

Confirmation of Minutes

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Maher, seconded by Cllr. W. Paton, the minutes of the February meeting, copy of which had been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

Matters Arising

The members enquired if there was any update regarding the university issue. The Director informed them that he was in the process of trying to organise a meeting between the Designated County Manager, the Cathaoirleach, the Director of WIT and himself, but that a date had not yet been finalised.

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that a forthcoming demonstration was being organised by FUSE (For a University in the South-East) in front of Dáil Éireann. He urged all members to support this worthy cause.

Rail Network in South-East Region

The following representatives attended the meeting from Iarnród Éireann:

- Barry Kenny, Corporate Communications Manager
- Emmett Cotter, District Manager, Waterford
- Kevin Finnegan, Station Manager, Waterford.

Mr. Kenny delivered a presentation to the members on the rail network under the following headings:

- Iarnród Éireann overview
- National Investment Programme
- Rail services in the South-East
- Investment and developments to date
- Plans for the future.

Mr. Kenny and his colleagues then responded to questions and comments from the members including the following:

- Dispute affecting the Carlow trains
- The necessity for train timetables to coincide with bus timetables
- The possibility of re-opening stations on main lines
- The possibility of having broadband transmitted via railway lines
- The problem of parking at railway stations
- The need for a linking bus service from Waterford station to the city
- Is track capacity sufficient for train and carriage capacity?
- Iarnród Éireann's plans regarding freight services
- Iarnród Éireann's plans to connect the railway line to Belview Port
- Catering services on trains
- The possibility of late night trains
- The need to resurrect 'South-East on Track'.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Kenny and his colleagues for attending the meeting and for their interesting and informative presentation.

'2020 Vision : Sustainable Travel & Transport'

The members noted contents of draft submission, copy of which had been circulated, made by the Authority to the Department of Transport on '2020 Vision : Sustainable Travel & Transport'.

The report outlined details of the South-East region and the role that the Authority has played in transport initiatives in the region, and stated that the Department of Transport must recognise the role that Regional Authorities

can play in the development and implementation of national, regional and local transport policies.

2008 Allocations for Non-National Roads

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on 2008 funding allocations for non-national roads notified to local authorities in the South-East by the Department of Environment, Heritage & Local Government. The report outlined the key aspects of the 2008 allocation and provided details of allocations to each constituent local authority in the South-East region.

The members expressed concern regarding the amounts allocated to the South-East region and stated that the country's infrastructure must be updated, particularly in rural areas. They stated that there is a Green Paper on local government reform soon to be published and requested that the Authority make a submission to this paper at the relevant time.

Draft Annual Report 2007

The members noted and considered details of the draft Annual Report for the year ending 31st December 2007, copy of which had been circulated. On the proposal of Cllr. D. Geoghegan, seconded by Cllr. T. Maher, the draft Annual Report 2007 was adopted by the members.

County Incomes and Regional GDP 2005

The members noted details of a summary report, copy of which had been circulated, on 'County Incomes and Regional GDP 2005', recently published by the Central Statistics Office. The report summarised the main points of the full report and showed the following tables which set out comparative figures and highlight the poor relative performance of the South-East regional in comparison with the Southern and Eastern NUTS II region, the other NUTS III regions and with the State:

Household Income

- Indices of disposable income per person – regions
- Indices of disposable income per person – counties

GDP

- Indices of GVA per person – regions

A summary of the main statistics from 'County Incomes and Regional GDP 2005' was also summarised by NUTS region.

Quarterly National Household Survey

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on the Quarterly National Household Survey for Quarter 4/2007, recently published by the Central Statistics Office. The report outlined the main highlights from the Survey and showed tables outlining figures comparing NUTS III regions at Q4/2007 and Unemployment Rate (%) comparison by NUTS III region at Q4/2007.

Annual Meeting of Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurances Ltd.

On the proposal of Cllr. D. Landy, seconded by Cllr. P. Codd, the members unanimously agreed that Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, Cathaoirleach, be nominated to attend the Annual Meeting of the Irish Public Bodies Mutual Insurance Company.

Correspondence

- Letter from the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment regarding 'capping' on the Community Employment Scheme.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

Sínithe: _____

Ceadaithe: _____

Dáta: _____

Dáta: _____