

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

**Minutes of the May monthly meeting of the South-East Regional Authority  
held at the Council Chamber, Wexford Borough Council, on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> May  
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. Coffey, Cllr. J. Crowe, Cllr. M. D'Arcy, Cllr. M. Fitzgerald, Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. D. Hurley, Cllr. P.J. Kavanagh, Cllr. T. Kinsella, Cllr. D. Landy, Cllr. T. Maher, Cllr. A. McDonald, Cllr. D. MacPartlin, Cllr. P. Norris, Cllr. S. Nyhan, Cllr. P. O'Callaghan, Cllr. M. O'Halloran, Cllr. W. Paton, Cllr. C. Phelan, Cllr. M. Roche, Cllr. J. Tobin, Cllr. D. Walsh, 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  
Mr. M. Malone, Designated County Manager.

**Apologies:** Cllr. P. Codd, Cllr. S. Connick, Cllr. T. Howlin, Cllr. C. Long, Cllr. L. O'Neill.

**Confirmation of Minutes**

On the proposal of Cllr. T. Maher, seconded by Cllr. D. Walsh, the minutes of the May monthly meeting, copy of which had been circulated, were unanimously approved and signed by the Cathaoirleach.

**Presentation from the Commission for Energy Regulation**

Two presentations were made to the members on behalf of the Commission for Energy Regulation (CER). Mr. Andrew Ebrill, Manager, Electricity Transmission outlined the following in his presentation:

- Role and function of CER in electricity
- Background to the CER
- CER Electricity Participants

- CER Electricity Market
- Statutory Duties of CER
- Electricity Generation and Access to National Grid
- CER Network Regulation
- Renewables : Group Processing Approach
- Renewables connected 2000 – 2006.

Mr. Tim O'Brien, Manager Networks Commercial outlined the following in his presentation:

- Connection to the Irish Gas Network
- Background information on gas network and gas regulation
- New Gas Connection Policy
- Industrial, commercial and domestic connections
- Criteria for inclusion of new towns in network.

Mr. Ebrill and Mr. O'Brien then responded to questions and queries from the members including the following:

- Plans to reduce cost of gas for domestic use
- The importance of an ESB tariff being set for voluntary groups
- The need for CER to promote renewable energy
- The need for alternative energies as soon as possible
- CER Policy on grievances from the public regarding gas and electricity provision
- The availability of Government subsidies to roll out gas networks
- The need for gas connections to be made where lines already exist.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Mr. Ebrill and Mr. O'Brien for their very interesting and informative presentation and informed the members that a copy of the presentation would be forwarded to them in the post.

### **Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Bill 2006**

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on the recently published Planning and Development (Strategic Infrastructure) Bill 2006. This Bill introduces a new strategic consent process for major infrastructure of national and public importance. An Bórd Pleanála will be restructured by the establishment of a dedicated Strategic Infrastructure Division.

The members expressed concern regarding the contents of the Bill. The Designated Co. Manager explained to the members that the purpose of the Bill is to speed up planning infrastructure for the country.

The Cathaoirleach informed the members that this report had outlined the key features of the Bill and any specific concerns regarding the Bill should be fed through each constituent local authority and the relevant SPCs.

### **Quarterly National Household Survey on Educational Attainment**

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on the Quarterly National Household Survey on Educational Attainment 2002 - 2005. The report outlined the main highlights of the Survey. The Research & Policy Officer informed the members that to date, there is no breakdown available of educational attainment across the regions. This information has been requested from the CSO and will be circulated to the members when available.

### **Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2005 -The Irish Report**

The members noted details of a report, copy of which had been circulated, on the Irish Report of the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor 2005, recently published by the Department of Enterprise, Trade & Employment.

### **Live Register 2006 and Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 4/2005**

The members noted details of the Live Register 2006 and Quarterly National Household Survey Quarter 4/2005, copy of which had been circulated. The report outlined the main features of the Live Register and Quarterly Survey and displayed tables detailing information relative to the South-East Region. The members stated that the report gives the overall impression of the South-East being a wealthy region, and requested that statistics be shown at county level to counteract this impression. They requested that all political parties lobby this issue at local level.

### **Response of Minister for Agriculture & Food in relation to Rural Development and the future viability of Irish farm families**

The members noted a response from the Minister for Agriculture & Food to the concerns of the Authority in relation to rural development and the future viability of Irish farm families. The members expressed serious concerns about this issue and proposed that it be put on the agenda for a future meeting of the Authority.

**Study Visit by a delegation from the South-East Regional Authority to Seville, Spain**

A report was circulated concerning the study visit made by a delegation comprising ten members of the South-East Regional Authority to Seville, Andalucia Region in Spain from 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> May 2006 at the invitation of the Ministry of the Department of Equality and Social Welfare. Ms. Sheevaun Thompson, Research & Policy Officer and Ms. Angela Sheehan, Office Manager accompanied the delegation.

The participants on the study visit found the visit to be very informative and interesting and found their hosts to be most welcoming. The members thanked Ms. Thompson and Ms. Sheehan for their help and assistance during the study visit.

**Any Other Matters**

- Cllr. T. Breathnach reminded the members that the Regional Assembly Conference was being held on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2006.

That concluded the business of the meeting.

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

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