



SOUTH-EAST REGIONAL AUTHORITY
Údarás Réigiúnach an Oir-Dheiscirt

**PROGRAMME OF WORK IN RESPECT OF YEAR ENDING
31st DECEMBER, 2008.**

Clár Oibre don bhliain dár críoch 31 Nollaig, 2008.

ADOPTED AT MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON

Glactha ag Cruinniú an Údaráis ar 28ú Eanáir, 2008.

Sínithe:

Cathaoirleach

Comhshínithe:

Stiúrthóir

1. **Establishment & Statutory Remit**

- 1.1 The Authority, comprising 36 elected members, was established under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993. The functional area of the Authority covers the five counties with six constituent local authorities in the South-East of Ireland - Carlow, Kilkenny, South Tipperary, Waterford City and County and Wexford. The functional area embraces 9,406 sq. kms. and a population of 460,838 about 11% of Ireland's population.
- 1.2 The Authority has the primary role in promoting co-ordination in the provision of public services in the region, including the promotion of co-operation and joint action between local authorities, public authorities and other bodies. The Authority has responsibility to review the provision of public services and the overall development needs of the region. In addition the Authority has the responsibility to provide proposals, advice, information and recommendations to Government for the purposes of plans and programmes relating to EU assistance and to review the implementation of measures for which EU assistance is made available.

2. **Objectives**

Having regard to the provisions of the Establishment Order, which set out the powers, functions and duties of Regional Authorities and matters to which Regional Authorities shall have regard, the Authority has the following objectives, the implementation of which form the basis of this Programme of Work:

- 2.1 Promote co-ordination in the provision of public services in the South-East region.
- 2.2 Promote co-ordination and, where appropriate, co-operation, joint action, joint arrangements, agreements, communication and consultation between the local authorities and the other public authorities in the region.
- 2.3 Promote co-ordination, consistency and compatibility with the programmes, plans, policies, proposals and objectives of Central Government or any Government Minister.
- 2.4 Promote consideration by public authorities of the implications for, or the effects of, their decisions, activities or services on, the region as a whole.
- 2.5 Review the overall development needs of the region and make statements as considered appropriate in relation to same.
- 2.6 Review the Development Plans of the local authorities in the region, and in the adjoining regions as appropriate, with a view to promoting consistency and a regard for the development requirements of the region.
- 2.7 Implement the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) at regional level through implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines prepared by the Authority in consultation with planning authorities and other statutory agencies.
- 2.8 Keep under review the provision of public services in or relating to or affecting the region.
- 2.9 Make statements as appropriate on matters relating to the functions of the Authority as may be requested by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government or a constituent authority.
- 2.10 Promote the objective of achieving uniform regional boundaries as far as practicable for all public services.
- 2.11 Provide such proposals, recommendations, advice or information as may be required by the Minister for Finance or by any other Minister in connection with the preparation of any plan, programme or other measure for the purpose of making or supporting an application to the European Union for financial assistance.
- 2.12 Review, at the request of the Minister for Finance, the implementation in the region of measures in respect of which financial assistance is made available by the European Union.
- 2.13 Review, in accordance with such terms, conditions, procedures or requirements that may be specified by the Minister for Finance, the operation of the National Development Plan and the National Strategic Reference Framework as respects the region and having regard to the development needs of the region.

- 2.14 Promote links and co-operation with the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, and provide such support as may be required to the seven Authority members that are members of the Assembly, with respect to the powers, functions and duties of the Regional Assembly.
- 2.15 Promote and support regional socio-economic development at all levels in cooperation with local and public authorities and other actors in the regional economy.

3. **Strategy and Action**

In discharging its statutory remit and responsibilities, and in pursuance of its objectives, the Authority will implement the following Programme of Work in respect of the year ending 31st December, 2008:

- 3.1 Foster and encourage the development and cultivation of a Regional Identity. The Authority will strive to be a strong voice for the region and continue to play a key role in unifying and harnessing the efforts of local and public authorities and community organisations for the well-being of the region.
- 3.2 Promote, through consultation, co-ordination and co-operation, the development of the following sectoral elements in the region and its economy:
- Agriculture, horticulture and food.
 - Equine industry.
 - Forestry, Fishing and aquaculture.
 - Industry and services.
 - Research and Technology Development, innovation and entrepreneurship.
 - Energy and exploitation of natural resources.
 - Tourism.
 - Urban Renewal and Urban & Rural Development.
 - Access and Internal Transport Infrastructure.
 - Water Supply, Sanitary, Waste Management and other services.
 - Environmental Protection and Sustainable Development.
 - Coast Protection, Inland Waterways, and Arterial Drainage.
 - Human Resources, Health, Education and Training and the enhancement of third level educational facilities in the region.
 - Physical and natural amenities, archaeological and historic heritage.
 - Cultural resources, arts facilities and the crafts sector.
 - Information and Communications Technology and the Information Society.
- 3.3 Co-operate with, and promote co-ordination of activities of public service providers and other agencies, including City/County Enterprise Boards, Leader Groups, Area Development Partnerships, City/County Development Boards, etc.
- 3.4 Review the economic and development needs of the region and promote the region's case for an adequate and greater share of EU assistance and national economic investment. The Authority will continue to press the region's case with Government. Moreover, the Authority will work to ensure that the development needs and priorities of the South-East are addressed in the implementation of the NDP 2007-2013.
- 3.5 Make submissions to the relevant authorities as appropriate in the interests of the region on various public policy matters.
- 3.6 The Authority strongly supports national and international initiatives to promote energy efficiency and will encourage and promote the development of renewable energy resources.
- 3.7 Publish and implement the Regional Bio-energy Implementation Plan and participate in the 'REGBIE' project which was approved in 2006 under the Intelligent Energy Call for proposals. The project will promote Regional Bio-energy Initiatives and thereby increase the market for Biomass in Europe and to assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the interests of combating climate change.
- 3.8 Promote and press the need for investment in, and improvement of, the region's strategic road and rail networks and port access routes in consultation and co-operation with the constituent local authorities. The Authority will pursue the case for investment in the region's ports and rail network and in the development and promotion of the South-East Regional Airport. It will also strongly press the urgency

of the need to provide the necessary water supply and waste water infrastructure to support industrial and general economic development in the region.

- 3.9 The Authority will continue to implement the South-East ICT Strategy and Action Plan developed through its 'SEISS' Project.
- 3.10 Following on from the "SERPANT" project, the Authority will continue implementing the roll-out of Broadband ICT Infrastructure in the region by managing the construction of networks. The Authority along with Wexford County Council, will continue to press the DCENR for inclusion of the County Wexford towns of Gorey, New Ross and Enniscorthy in a further phase. The Authority will also implement a Wifi Initiative for Kilkenny City and Wexford Town.
- 3.11 Co-ordinate the implementation of a Regional Passenger Transport Strategy in association with local authorities, city/county development boards, transport providers and other appropriate agencies and organisations.
- 3.12 Monitor ongoing developments and progress on the major flood relief schemes for Carlow, Kilkenny Clonmel/Carrick-on-Suir, Waterford and Wexford.
- 3.13 Support the implementation of the Regional Waste Management Strategy and Plan for the South-East Region.
- 3.14 Support the implementation of a coherent tourism strategy for the region. Consult with the regional and local tourism bodies. Continue supporting the development and promotion of the region's craft sector and the operation and work of the Regional Craft Centre – "the Craft Granary".
- 3.15 Examine the potential of Waterford Estuary from a tourism, leisure, business and commercial perspective.
- 3.16 Promote a regional sustainable development strategy having regard to the provisions of the National Sustainable Development Strategy and assist and co-ordinate the activities of the constituent local authorities in developing Local Agenda 21 and sustainable development strategies for their areas. Liaise with the Local Agenda 21 Officers Network.
- 3.17 Monitor, and participate in, implementation of the National Spatial Strategy through implementation of the Regional Planning Guidelines prepared by the Authority during 2004 in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.
- 3.18 Promote the objectives set out in the 'Atlantic Gateways' report, which explores the potential for greater linkages between the 'Gateway' cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford in the interest of promoting balanced regional development. During 2007 participate in the two Corridor Framework Working Groups of relevance to the region.
- 3.19 Support and co-operate with Waterford City Council in its application under the terms of the Gateway Innovation Fund (GIF) and, if successful, in the implementation of the approved proposals.
- 3.20 Work with the Higher Education Institutes, enterprise support-agencies and other key actors to enhance the level of innovation and entrepreneurial activity and economic development in the South-East.
- 3.21 Promote and participate in other relevant EU Initiatives and Programmes for the benefit of the region, e.g. INTERREG IV, FP7 etc. and through the European Officer encourage, assist and co-operate with local and public authorities in the region in sourcing and participating in EU programmes and projects, and in generally seeking to maximise the uptake of EU assistance by the region.
- 3.22 Liaise, consult, assist, support and co-operate with the two Members of the EU Committee of the Regions in the region in order to enhance participation in the EU policy process. Support the Irish Regions Office in Brussels established by the Association of Irish Regions.
- 3.23 Spreagadh agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do chur chun cinn agus d'fhorbairt na Gaeilge agus na dtraidisúin, an chultúir agus na hoidhreacht sa réigiún agus, go háirithe, i gceantar Ghaeltacht na Rinne, i gcomhar le hÚdarás na Gaeltachta, údaráis phoiblí agus eagraíochtaí atá bunaithe ar an bpobal. Cuireann Acht na dTeangacha Oifigiúla, 2003 dualgais ar eagraíochtaí poiblí, agus ar Údaráis Réigiúnacha, seirbhísí a chur ar fáil don phobal trí Ghaeilge. Glacfhaidh an t-Údarás lena freagracht maidir le greamú do na coinníollacha an Achta.

(The Authority will encourage and support the promotion and development of the Irish language, traditions, culture and heritage in the region, and particularly in the Ring Gaeltacht area, in co-operation with Údarás na Gaeltachta, public authorities and community-based organisations. The Official Languages Act, 2003 places obligations on public bodies, including Regional Authorities, to provide for services to the public through Irish. The Authority will discharge its responsibility to ensure compliance with the provisions of the Act.)

- 3.24 Support and promote the case for enhanced third-level educational facilities and, in particular, the provision of a University of the South-East to be established at Waterford with links to existing third-level facilities in Carlow, Kilkenny, Wexford and South Tipperary.
- 3.25 Promote the South-East region as an attractive location for inward industrial investment. Consult and co-operate with the national and regional industrial and economic support agencies in the effective promotion of the South-East.
- 3.26 The Authority will provide a strong and effective voice articulating the deficiencies and needs of the South-East region. It will forcefully present the region's case to Government and state agencies, and will develop and promote links with the region's public representatives in the Oireachtas, the European Parliament and the EU Committee of the Regions. The Authority will provide information on its policies, objectives and activities through effective communication with local and public authorities and with the public through its website (www.sera.ie), the media, publications, information seminars and other appropriate means.

4. Implementation & Resources

- 4.1 The Authority will carry out its functions and its Programme of Work having regard to the general welfare and development of the Region, including -
- its physical, economic, social, demographic, infrastructural and environmental characteristics, its development potential and the protection and improvement of its environmental, heritage and cultural resources including arts facilities.
 - the programmes, plans, policies, proposals and objectives of central Government and any Government Minister and of local authorities and other relevant public authorities.
 - the resources that are available, or are likely to be available, for the provision of public services and the need to secure the most beneficial, effective and efficient use of such resources.
 - the implications for other regions of the services of public authorities in or relating to the region.
- 4.2 The Authority will strive to maintain and continuously improve a culture of learning and development amongst staff by promoting staff involvement and participation in further education, training and development.
- 4.3 The Authority will implement this Programme of Work within the resources available under its adopted Budget for year ending 31st December, 2008 and such other resources as may be available to it during the year.