

**MINUTES of the 5<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE  
BORDER, MIDLAND AND WESTERN  
REGIONAL OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME 2014-2020  
MONITORING COMMITTEE**

**held in the  
Council Chamber, Roscommon County Council, Áras on Chontae, Roscommon  
on  
May 17<sup>th</sup> 2018**

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**ATTENDANCE:** (See attached)

**INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME**

The Chairperson of the BMW Regional OP Monitoring Committee, Mr. David Minton, Managing Authority, presided.

Mr. Minton thanked Roscommon Co. Co. for the provision of the council chamber for the meeting and welcomed the committee members to the fifth meeting of the BMW Regional OP Monitoring Committee.

Mr. Minton briefly outlined the progress over the last 12 months under the 2014-20 Regional OP and referred to the impact on the ground under the programme. He reported on the closure of the 2007-13 programme with a 1% error rate and pointed out that the Managing Authority is currently waiting on final correspondence from the EU Commission to finalise this. He informed the members of the designation of the IT contingency system and reported that the N+3 targets were exceeded in 2017. Mr. Minton thanked the IB's, Beneficiaries, and staff of the Regional Assembly for their work and support throughout the year. He pointed out that the key challenges for 2018 will be meeting the milestones and stated that the N+3 targets for 2018 were on target to be met.

**1. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA**

**Proposed by** Mr. Eugene Daly

**Seconded by** Mr. Michael Hughes

*“That the Agenda be adopted”*

The Agenda was **ADOPTED** and **AGREED** by all

## **2. ADOPTON OF THE MINUTES OF THE BMW REGIONAL OP MONITORING COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017**

Ms. Elena Panteva, EU Commission, informed the meeting that the Commission had some amendments to make to the minutes which would be submitted to the Managing Authority following the meeting.

**Proposed by** Ms. Elena Panteva

**Seconded by** Ms. Nuala Dormer

*“That the Minutes of the BMW Regional OP Monitoring Committee Meeting of the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017, subject to the EU Commission amendments, be adopted”*

The Minutes of the BMW Regional OP Monitoring Committee Meeting of the 28<sup>th</sup> November 2017, *subject to the EU Commission amendments*, were **ADOPTED** and **AGREED** by all

### **3a. PROGRESS REPORTS FOR EACH PRIORITY**

#### **Priority 1: Strengthening RTDI in the BMW Region**

*SFI Research Centres Programme*

*SFI Investigators Programme*

*SFI Spokes Programme*

Ms Joan Hynes, Science Foundation Ireland, outlined briefly the physical and financial progress of the SFI Programmes.

Firstly, she explained that Science Foundation Ireland is the national research funding agency and stated that the largest SFI programme is the Research Centres Programme. Ms. Hynes reported on the 2 large scale Research Centres based in NUIG and pointed out that the INSIGHT Research Centre finishes in June 2019 and the CURAM finishes at the end of 2020. She reported that there is a call out for subsequent research centres which could be a renewal of these existing centres but stated no decision has been made on this yet. In terms of the performance indicators under the research centres programme she informed the members that the number of new researches co funded under the programme was 210 at the end of 2017 which is well ahead of the midterm targets. She stated that the objectives of the research centres is to engage industry who have to pay cash and in kind in order to participate in the cutting-edge research and pointed out that there are an additional 98 industry partners involved in the two research centres in the region.

In terms of expenditure, Ms. Hynes reported that it is hoped that the expenditure incurred up to the end of 2017 which can be declared will be in the region of €25m and informed the members that €8m has already been declared. Under the Horizontal Principles, she reported that SFI is very conscious of trying to improve the participation of women in research. She stated that as of 2016, 25% of the research awards are led by women which is up from 21% in 2015. She informed the meeting of SFI's Gender Strategy 2016-2020 with a target that these figures will be up to 30% by 2020.

Ms. Hynes reported that to date there have been no SFI Spokes Programmes awarded in the BMW Region and informed the members that there has been no expenditure to date under this programme. She stated that the Spokes Programme is an initiative to enable the addition of new industrial and academic partners to an existing SFI Research Centre which allows the Centre to expand and develop in line with new priorities and opportunities.

Under the SFI Investigators Programme Ms. Hynes informed the members of the 12 investigator awards which were made to NUIG between 2014 and 2017 with a maximum spend of around €9m eligible for ERDF funding. She reported that it is hoped an amount of €2m would be declared for the period up to the end of 2017 and pointed out that SFI is very committed in participating in the BMW OP.

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, thanked Ms. Hynes for her update on the SFI programmes. She stated that the progress report demonstrates the importance of the work being carried out by SFI but also highlighted the importance of drawdown of all eligible expenditure going forward.

Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, thanked Ms. Hynes for her update on the SFI Programmes and pointed out the importance of innovation and research under the OP. She stated that it is hoped that Ireland will deliver well in respect of physical outputs and results under the research programmes with expenditure following. In relation to the Spokes Programme, Ms. Toikka asked what would need to be done to get spokes programme awards in the BMW Region and for the 2 research centres to become more competitive. Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield explained that it is up to the INSIGHT Research Centre and the CURAM Research Centre to put forward projects to apply for the spokes scheme. However, she pointed out that so far they haven't done so and stated that the research centres are currently busy engaging in spending the money on the core research centre grant.

### ***Marine Research Programme***

Mr. Michael O'Brien, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, explained that the Marine Institute has no expenditure to report for 2017, and stated there have been no commitments for ERDF co-funding entered into by the Marine Institute to date.

He informed the members that the Managing Authority has engaged over the last few months with the Marine Institute to review the Marine Research Programme and he outlined the details of the revised marine research implementation plan which was circulated to the members for approval. Mr. O'Brien reported on the new marine research scheme proposed for approval which targets both the public and private sector and includes research centres, post-doctoral researchers and also SMEs. He informed the members that this initiative involves a gross investment of €5m over a 3 year rollout period with the objectives of the scheme consistent with the overarching research objectives to raise the research capacity in the marine sector and also to approve technology transfer and the engagement of industry with research infrastructure throughout the region. Under the initiative he stated that €2m covering both the private and public sector has been allocated to an SME industry led scheme and it is envisaged that 10 companies under both Regional OPs will access up to €200,000 per project by way of an open call to develop marine based innovative technologies and services. He

informed the members that this scheme is consistent with both National and EU policies in terms of harnessing our ocean wealth and also consistent with the Irish Government's Marine Research and Innovation Strategy, the EU Blue Growth Strategy and the Atlantic Action Plan.

In conclusion Mr. O'Brien reported that under agenda item 7 the revised Marine Research Programme implementation plan will be presented to the members for approval.

Mr. Paul Herron, ERDF Audit Authority, asked if the beneficiaries had received any funding yet under the proposed marine research scheme and queried the timing of expenditure declaration and the revision of systems descriptions and other issues under these schemes. Mr. O'Brien explained that it is proposed to start the SME led scheme now with applications due to be submitted over the summer for approval with declarations due next year. He reported that the Managing Authority would be working closing with the Marine Institute to ensure that the systems descriptions, procedure manuals and all the regulatory requirements would be put in place.

### ***Enterprise Ireland Commercialisation Fund Innovation Partnerships Programme***

Mr. Michael Hughes, Enterprise Ireland, explained that Enterprise Ireland seeks to encourage and facilitate high quality applied research with a view to exploiting the technical expertise and knowledge that exists in the 3<sup>rd</sup> level colleges. He reported that the commercialisation fund provides financial support to researches in 3<sup>rd</sup> level institutes and research performing organisations in the Institutes of Technology, Universities and other research agencies like Teagasc.

Mr. Hughes informed the members that the Commercialisation Fund focusses on bringing research activity to a commercial product or service which can be sold which can lead to economic benefit for the country and pointed out that it is run in two stages. The first stage is the commercial feasibility fund of up to €15,000 to scope out the market feasibility for the scientific knowledge which exists. The second stage is the full commercialisation fund which would range from €80,000 up to €350,000 and higher in special circumstances. In terms of output he reported that in 2017 there were 12 operations selected and approved for support in the BMW Region with 2 commercial licences achieved. He also reported that in 2017 there were 6 new start-up companies set up, which included 5 high potential start-up companies.

Mr. Hughes reported that the Innovation Partnerships Programme is a programme to encourage Irish based companies to work with Irish research institutes to achieve mutual benefit for both the company and the college. He informed the members that these are collaborative technology programmes and stated that there is a lot of evidence to show that companies who engage in collaborative research significantly outplay those who don't. He pointed out that EI funding for collaborative research goes directly to the college which can be up to 80% with the balance coming from industry and he explained that this programme includes a feasibility stage together with the full project proposals. Mr. Hughes informed the members that in 2017 there were 10 fully implemented projects with 27 selected for approval and the level of funding in the region of €650,000.

### ***Enterprise Ireland Industry R&D Fund***

Mr. Eugene Daly, Enterprise Ireland, informed the members that the R&D Fund is a fund for industry and pointed out that the target over the life of the programme is to assist 120 companies. He stated that at the end of 2017, 72 companies had received approval under this fund with 33 fully implemented projects. He explained that the funding target for R&D is €22m over the life of the programme and reported that for the period ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 projects amounting to €10.85 million had been approved for funding. Mr. Daly informed the members that EI has declared €2.15m to the Managing Authority and it is anticipated that another €2.2m will be declared by next September. He stated that the number of companies who spend greater than €100,000m per annum in R&D is another indicator to monitor this programme and outlined that the final target for this indicator is set at 220 companies with an output of 209 companies achieving this goal by the end of 2016. In conclusion Mr. Daly thanked the Regional Assembly and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform for all their support and assistance throughout the year.

Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, thanked Mr. Daly for his report and asked if he was optimistic if the final target of 120 companies receiving R&D support would be met. Mr. Daly stated that he was confident that this target would be met and pointed out that EI have recently introduced a new Agile Programme to encourage smaller companies participate in R&D.

### **Priority 2: Information & Communication Technologies**

#### ***National Broadband Plan***

Ms. Nuala Dormer, Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, reported on the progress of the National Broadband Plan (NBP). Ms. Dormer stated that the National Broadband Plan is a government initiative aimed at delivering future proof high speed broadband to every citizen and business in Ireland. The current minimum speeds set as per the intervention strategy is 30 mbps download with 6 mbps upload in accordance with the digital agenda for Europe. However, she reported that the Department is aware that the requirement from Europe for 2025 will be up to 100 mbps and the Department is confident that the procurement procedures which are underway will deliver this network for Ireland.

Ms. Dormer outlined that the total eligible funding committed under ERDF is €75m with €45m eligible under the BMW Regional OP. She stated that the NBP is a very large infrastructural project which will operate for 25 years and is a very ambitious project. Ms. Dormer informed the members that the aim of the project is to cover 542,000 premises in the intervention area. She reported that the procurement process for the project has entered its final stages and although the procurement is set at technology neutral solution, the proposals received so far from the bidders in the process is predominantly fibre to the home. Ms. Dormer reported that following submission of the detailed solutions from two bidders in September 2017 one bidder withdrew from the process and she stated that the remaining bidder qualified in the initial stages of procurement and has robustly engaged with the NBP procurement team. She informed the members that as the Department is currently in the procurement

process she is not in the position to comment on the final deployment plans, however when contracts have been signed the Department will be very clear in respect of deployment plans and milestones.

Ms. Dormer stated that in year 1, 2 and 3 the Department have asked that the successful bidder connect strategic community access hubs in each county on signature of contract which will immediately improve local connections while the larger deployment continues in the initial years of the contract. Ms. Dormer pointed out that the Department is aware that people, in particular local enterprises and micro enterprises, in the intervention areas are extremely frustrated and held back due to the lack of broadband and stated that the detailed solution due to be implemented is a once in a generation solution for current and future generations.

Ms. Dormer informed the members that the network of broadband officers and local authorities establishes part of the mobile phone and broadband taskforce who are carrying out very important preparatory work on the ground to ensure a smooth roll out of the NBP. She stated that the Department continues to engage with the Jaspers unit of the European Investment Bank (EIB) to provide support to progress the major project notification with the latest draft of the feasibility study being submitted for their consideration at the end of April this year. She informed the members that the Department is planning to submit major project notifications approval by Q3 of this year. She reported that the latest iteration of the state aid application was sent at the beginning of May to DG Competition for review with final communication expected from them shortly with a view to submitting the state aid notification by the end of the summer at the latest.

Ms. Dormer stated that the Department welcomes the endorsement of the EIB who have agreed to allocate finance of €500m to the roll out of a high-speed broadband network for the NBP in Ireland which can be leveraged for the benefit of the state and by the private sector bidder appointed through the procurement process. She pointed out that finance from the EIB provides a project with funding support from a lender whose objectives are aligned both to the state and the EU and has the benefit of attractive pricing and quality stamping encouraging financing from other investors. Ms. Dormer reported that commercial investment also continues and stated that Eir are rolling out a rural predominately fibre broadband network to 300,000 premises as of Q1 2018. She stated that Siro, a joint venture with Vodafone and ESB, are also committed to investing €450m for fibre broadband to 500,000 homes and Virgin have increased by 100,000 their high-speed broadband service to reach 900,000 premises with a further 100,000 premises planned.

Ms. Dormer informed the members that the Imagine group announced recently an investment of €120m from a Canadian investment firm with a view to assisting them in rolling out a high-speed broadband infrastructure to rural and regional areas following approval by competition and regulatory authorities. She reported that the release of the 3.6 GHz auction last year will enable operators such as Imagine to provide improved 4G broadband and hopefully improve LTE and ultimately 5G across the country and similarly the roll out of a predominately fibre spine in the infrastructure will also support this new technology. Ms. Dormer informed the members that the Department is closing out its strategic EIS and AA and expect to publish the reports related to these shortly. In conclusion she acknowledged that the procurement process is a long process

and pointed out that the Department is aware that it is an urgent requirement for people in urban, rural and regional areas. She added that the Department is committed to ensuring that the procurement process is done correctly to ensure delivery of high speed broadband for this generation and the next.

Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, complemented Ms. Dormer on her detailed update of the NBP and stated that she welcomed the new developments and pointed out the importance of the broadband issue. She referred to the ERDF negotiations of the BMW and S&E Regional OPs with complementarities and synergies between the various priorities and a focus of co-investment on research, innovation and SME support. She stated that in these modern times the superfast broadband delivery from the NBP is welcomed.

In accordance with the NBP progress report from the Department of Communications she pointed out that if the NBP procurement process is finalised in 2018 with roll out of the plan commencing in January 2019 it would leave only two more years for implementation. However, she informed the members that the NBP is very good but highlighted concerns that the delivery has been delayed. Ms. Toikka informed the members that DG Regio is the only directorate general who is co-investing millions in various member states and in broadband and she pointed out the importance that broadband delivery would follow the European Gigabit Society 2025 which would be a direct link to the future and the current needs of the population and in particular the economic operators in each member state.

Ms. Toikka explained that the European Gigabit Society is an updated European digital agenda for Europe 2025 which includes three main strategic objectives. These include; broadband delivery with a gigabit connectivity for all main socio-economic drivers in all of Europe; uninterrupted 5G coverage for all urban areas and major terrestrial transport paths and affordable access to connectivity offering at least 100 mbps for all European households. In conclusion she pointed out that there are a lot of challenges ahead for Irish economic operators and explained that competitiveness and skills are linked to modern access to superfast broadband in this ever-increasing global environment.

Mr. David Minton, Northern and Western Regional Assembly, informed the members that the NBP is a priority for the Managing Authority and explained the ERDF element of the NBP is under no risk and is a key element of the Regional OP.

### **Priority 3: SME Support, Promotion & Capability Development**

#### ***Entrepreneurship in Micro-Enterprise (Local Enterprise Offices)***

Mr. Martin Corry, Enterprise Ireland reported that in 2017 the Entrepreneurship in Micro-enterprise scheme was delivered through the 13 Local Enterprise Offices (LEOs) located in the Border, Midlands and Western Region. He explained that the LEOs are the first stop shop for enterprise development. The specific objective of this priority is to foster and grow a cohort of entrepreneurs in the BMW region with the skills and resources to accelerate the start-up and expansion of their enterprises.

Mr. Corry outlined that a dedicated Micro Enterprise and Small Business Unit has been established within Enterprise Ireland. Within this unit a national Centre of Excellence has been created to ensure that all micro and small businesses benefit from an expanded and benchmarked service across all regions.

In general, Mr. Corry reported that the performance indicators highlight a very good operating performance to date, especially across some key measures, including the number of enterprises receiving support and employment increase in these enterprises. He stated that in terms of expenditure it is estimated that in 2017 approximately €7.7m will be available to claim for this period.

Mr. Corry informed the members that the LEOs in the BMW region participate in cross-Border projects such as: Co Innovate, TARGET, Plato EBR, and in informal networks of cooperation at district and local area level. He stated that joint LEO-LEA (Northern network of Local Enterprise Agencies) activities are undertaken to introduce micro-businesses in either jurisdiction to Island-wide market possibilities for products and services. Mr. Corry reported that other activities promoted on a cross-border basis include business visit exchanges, joint marketing initiatives, exhibitions, alliances and joint ventures etc. Co-operation in female entrepreneurship is also encouraged through links established by the LEO Women-in-Business Networks with various women groups/ organisations in Northern Ireland. He stated that going forward there is likely to be joint co-operation and initiatives pertaining to Brexit.

Mr. Corry reported that the LEOs continue to publicise their programmes and activities through various media and channels. In each case the EU logo and accreditation is printed and displayed prominently. He stated that beneficiaries are also required to acknowledge EU Contribution.

In relation to gender equality Mr. Corry explained that the LEOs generally seek to proactively gender-mainstream their operational activities and structures, particularly in regard to gender balance requirements, with a view to achieving optimum levels of gender equality. He reported that the LEOs help promote equal diverse and socially inclusive societies including disability and help combat poverty and inequality through co-operation with local and rural development structures and facilitation of job creation.

He informed the members of the number of highlights for 2017 which included the Student Enterprise Programme and the IBYE programme. Under the Student Enterprise Programme he reported that the LEO network engaged with 23,635 students nationally from 483 secondary schools which stimulated the whole area of entrepreneurship. Mr. Corry reported on the evaluation study of the IBYE programme which is focussed on the youth demographic. The evaluation study looked at three years since the programme was initiated in 2014 and he highlighted that to date the performance of this cohort of people is very encouraging. He pointed out that employment in excess of 2,200 people has been generated together with annual revenues in the region of €124m/€125m and also exports to global markets. He added that the IBYE 2017 programme attracted 1,500 applications across all regions.

In conclusion Mr. Corry reported that the LEOs are performing well and with a very good economic environment it makes it relatively easier to support enterprises, job creation and job sustainability. Going forward he stated that the LEOs are in a good

position to take advantage of the economic performance and he thanked the Northern & Western Regional Assembly for the support and work throughout the year.

Ms. Aedin Mc Loughlin, Environment Pillar, expressed her concerns with regard to some of EIs output performance indicator targets and referred to the support of new enterprises and the business start-up targets in particular.

Mr. Martin Corry acknowledge that there are some issues with these targets which need to be examined further and explained that on an economic performance scale job sustainability is becoming more important now due to our full employment economy. He informed the meeting that EI now see a lot more proposals on job sustainability with existing companies and stated that going forward the entrepreneurial side will be a bigger challenge for EI. Mr. Corry explained that some of these targets were set when the economy was in a different position and from the point of view of the start up environment it is now more challenging for EI.

Ms. Caitlin Conneely, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, informed the meeting of the midterm evaluation which will be carried out this year and pointed out that the indicators will be looked at during this evaluation which should resolve some of the queries raised.

#### ***Enterprise Ireland New Frontiers Programme***

Mr. Michael Hughes, Enterprise Ireland, explained that the New Frontiers programme is an entrepreneurial development programme delivered at a local level by the Institutes of Technology. He stated that the purpose of the programme is to accelerate the development of sustainable startup companies. Mr. Hughes reported on the introductory phase 1 evening course but stated that phase 2 is the main element of the programme. Phase 2 provides start up people with financial support of up to €15,000 and a 6 month intensive training course including incubation space who are also provided with mentoring support. Mr. Hughes informed the meeting that in 2017 there were 53 New Frontiers participants in the BMW Region.

#### ***Enterprise Ireland Supporting the Capacity of SMEs***

Mr. Eugene Daly, Enterprise Ireland, explained that this programme was implemented to enhance the competitiveness of SME's in Ireland and to support regional, national and international growth opportunities. He reported that the target over the life of the programme is to assist 110 companies and outlined that at the end of 2017 a total of 144 companies had received approval for funding with 80 of these projects fully implemented. Mr. Daly informed the members that the public expenditure target is set at €13m over the life of the programme and stated that by the end of 2017 this target was exceeded with projects amounting to €18.5m being approved. He also reported that to date €3.7m in expenditure had been declared and stated that it is anticipated that another €2.2m will be declared by September on the eCohesion system.

In relation to the issue of horizontal principles Mr. Daly pointed out that awards under this programme are made on the merits of individual company applications, including the commercial and technical viability of projects. He stated that EI places a strong emphasis on female participation and business and informed the members of EIs female entrepreneurship unit. He stated that in 2017 EI supported 67 female led start-ups and pointed out that of the 90 high potential start-up's supported by EI in 2017, 27% were

female led companies. In conclusion Mr. Daly thanked the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform and the Northern & Western Regional Assembly for the invaluable advice and assistance provided during the past year.

Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, acknowledged that progress on the ground under Priority 3 of the BMW OP is very positive and asked about the development of these programmes for 2018 in particular with regard to outputs and development of physical results going forward. Mr. Eugene Daly reported that the target for the SME programme of €13m has now been exceeded and pointed out that as the economy is now growing at 5%, Ireland is moving towards full employment. Mr. Martin Corry reported that the 31 LEOs across the country now employ in excess of 37,000 people covering over 7,000 companies. He explained that the main emphasis for EI is to work with these companies to sustain these jobs. He stated that as Ireland is a small market place it would need to see a lot more of these companies exporting and developing innovative products and solutions. Mr. Corry informed the members that EI launched a technical assistance fund for micro exporters and a lean for micro fund and have also discussed launching an investment fund for innovative products to target existing companies to sustain these jobs even more.

He stated that there is still a lot of interest in entrepreneurship but due to people becoming employed in companies the interest isn't as high as it was a few years ago which is a challenge for EI going forward. He pointed out that it is important that these companies have the support to become stronger companies by focussing on exports, innovation and competitiveness. Ms. Merja Toikka, acknowledged the importance of these companies going international.

Mr. Corry pointed out that Ireland is a limited economy from a marketing point of view and therefore it is important that there is an export agenda. He stated that EI is focussed predominately on export development for its client companies but outlined that micro enterprise is more difficult due to the size of the companies and therefore EI needs to focus on working with these small companies to become export companies. Mr. Corry informed the members that the encouraging indicator for EI is the increase in micro enterprise companies transferring to EI's HPSUs programme and pointed out that in excess of 50 companies transferred from the LEO's this year.

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield acknowledged the work of the Regional Assembly, Enterprise Ireland and the LEOs on the results that have been delivered under Priority 3. She acknowledged that there is a need for balanced regional development and pointed out the importance of fostering entrepreneurship in the SME sector. In terms of the performance indicators she noted that there were 3,760 new jobs created in businesses supported by the LEOs and in excess of 30,000 training interventions provided.

Ms. Caulfield outlined that the exchequer funding is provided up front for these programmes with an expectation that the 50% co financing due from the EU be claimed in a timely fashion. In the Annual Implementation Report, Ms. Caulfield noted that there has been 31.2m selected for support under priority 3 and 25.7m grant aided to beneficiaries to date. She thanked all involved for their work on the N+3 claims last year and pointed out that €6m was declared. However, she stated that the milestones

for Priority 3 is €23.2m and outlined the importance of achieving these milestones and referred to the 6% performance reserve attached to these milestones.

#### **Priority 4: Low Carbon Economy**

##### ***Social Housing Retrofit of Vacant Housing Stock / Social Housing Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (Phase 2)***

Representatives from the Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government, (DHPLG) conveyed their apologies as they were unable to attend the meeting. In their absence Mr. Michael O'Brien, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, reported on the Social Housing Retrofit Voids Programme and the Energy Efficiency Programme (*phase 2*).

Mr. O'Brien pointed out that there was no expenditure declared to date under either of these programmes but informed the members of the level of activity which is ongoing at local authority level. Under the Energy Efficiency Programme he reported that in 2017 work was undertaken in the BMW Region on 80 properties with an overall cost of over €750,000 and outlined that the DHPLG paid out €589,000 of this to the local authorities. Under the Voids Programme Mr. O'Brien informed the members that the number of vacant units retrofitted in 2017 was 408 of which 270 units had energy efficiency works undertaken at a cost of just over €1.3m.

Mr. O'Brien reported that over the period 2015 to 2017 both schemes have reported good expenditure with a total amount of €1.9m spend reported in the AIR under the Energy Efficiency Retrofitting Programme (*Phase 2*) and €5.5m spend reported under the Voids Programme. He pointed out that the Managing Authority is currently working with the Department to ensure that all the regulatory compliances are in place together with procedural and systems issues to allow expenditure declarations to commence towards the end of this year.

##### ***Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme***

Apologies were received from the Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment (DCCA), as a representative was not available to attend the meeting.

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield, Department of Public Expenditure & Reform, acknowledged the work of the DCCA, DHPLG and SEAI under Priority 4 and the importance of these schemes in contributing to Ireland's commitments in the reduction of carbon emissions. She pointed out the increased public awareness in relation to climate change and the environmental consequences and stated that housing is a key priority for Government and the EU. Ms. Caulfield reported on the importance of the social housing retrofitting schemes and stated that priority should now be given to the designation of these schemes and she also highlighted the importance of declaring expenditure as quickly as possible.

Ms. Aedin Mc Loughlin, Environment Pillar, referred to the low carbon economy strategic development report and pointed that the shift to a low carbon economy in the north west is not given the priority that it should be given. She stated that the north west is missing an enormous potential for communities to benefit from the roll out of

renewable energies and to get involved as this is a new sector with potential for new jobs with revenue to be gained. She stated that there are supports to be put in place to raise the capacity of communities to get involved in this whole sector and pointed out the lack of vision to help the north west attain its potential. In conclusion Ms. Mc Loughlin pointed out that the north west could have the potential for the whole island of Ireland in renewable energies and she outlined some of the resources that are currently available to enable this region to reach its potential in this area.

Mr. David Minton, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, noted Ms. Mc Loughlin's comments and referred to the Low Carbon Economy Priority under the BMW Regional OP, where there are a number of schemes which are creating jobs and addressing some of the challenges of a low carbon economy. He acknowledged the ambition for the north west region to reach its low carbon economy potential. He informed the members that under the NPF a strategy is being created over the next 12 months where there is an ambition to have a region that is export orientated, low carbon and innovation driven. He stated that these are the three themes that are formulating our Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy up until 2040. In conclusion, he pointed out that post 2020 there should be a lot of alignment of the Regional OP with our regional priorities which will ultimately help achieve our shared ambitions.

## **Priority 5: Sustainable Urban Development**

### ***Designated Urban Centres Grant Scheme***

Mr. Michael O'Brien, Managing Authority, reported that this scheme has approved €14m of ERDF funding to six Local Authorities in the BMW region, which includes 7 specific projects aimed at enhancing urban streetscapes and addressing the whole transportation agenda under Priority 5. Mr. O'Brien informed the meeting that during 2017 the Managing Authority engaged with all the local authorities who are participating in the scheme and reported that detailed discussions with senior officials within the local authorities have also taken place. He informed the members that there have been significant delays experienced at local authority level which are outlined in the Annual Implementation Report.

He stated that these delays include securing planning permission, the part 8 planning process, consultations with community interests, changes at staffing levels within the local authorities and issues with utility providers which have delayed the process of getting the projects up and running. However, Mr. O'Brien reported that the Managing Authority doesn't envisage any issues with the draw down of ERDF funds but he stated that it is expected that there will be a requirement for an extensions to these projects to allow them to successfully drawn down this funding.

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield outlined the importance of Priority 5 in relation to the visibility of EU funding locally and also the promotion and benefits of EU membership within local communities. She acknowledged the importance of adhering to legislative requirements under EU procurement rules and stated that it is justifiable to seek a revision of the milestones under this priority with the support of the EU Commission.

## **Priority 6: Technical Assistance**

### ***Technical Assistance***

Mr. Caitlin Conneely, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, informed the members that the Technical Assistance budget is a budget that is given to the Managing Authority to manage the roll out of the Regional OP. She reported that the total budget over the period of the programme is €4m and stated that the spend to date is just over €1m. Ms. Conneely outlined the performance indicator outputs for the technical assistance scheme. She stated that in 2017 there were two monitoring committee meetings held and informed the members that the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting which was held in Galway in November was a thematic meeting which was very successful. Ms. Conneely pointed out that the aim of the thematic meeting was to bring attention to the results and outputs and the real impacts that the Operational Programme is having on the ground and the difference it is making to the region.

Ms. Conneely reported on the annual publicity event, the *One Region One Vision* Conference, which was held in Galway on the same day and with the same theme as the Monitoring Committee Meeting. She informed the members that this was a very successful event which brings focus to the Regional OP. She outlined that other indicators during the year included the number of staff from the Intermediate Bodies and Managing Authorities who participated in capacity building measures throughout 2017. In conclusion, Ms. Conneely pointed out that the eCohesion system is now in place which is an important indicator for the Managing Authority.

Mr. David Minton, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, pointed out the importance of addressing the promotion of what the Regional OP is achieving and the impact of EU Funding to the region.

### **3b. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

Mr. Caitlin Conneely, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, gave a brief update on the expenditure declarations made to the EU Commission up to the end of April 2018. She reported that up to December 2017, €21.5m was declared to the Commission and pointed out that this exceeded the N+3 target of €20.24m. She also reported on the €10m which was declared for the period ending April 2018 which has an N+3 target of €17.4m and informed the members that the Managing Authority is confident that this target will be met. Ms. Conneely outlined the amount of work that has been undertaken by all Intermediate Bodies and Beneficiaries in order to achieve these declarations and presented the meeting with a list of the declarations made under each priority and scheme.

Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, acknowledge the good progress on the ground reported under the various priorities of the BMW OP but pointed out that it is very important that the physical and financial targets for 2023 are achieved. She outlined that there are third party personnel in the EU Commission who are monitoring closing the progress of the physical and financial indicators for each OP. She informed the members that questions can be raised on the progress reported in any of the official documents, including the AIR, which are submitted to the Commission and pointed out that an example of this is the question of how Irish OPs would achieve their physical

indicators at the end of 2023 if the 2018 financial milestones cannot be met as the milestones are based on carried out indicators. Ms. Toikka explained to the members that answers to these types of questions have to come through in the documents submitted to the Commissions, including the AIR. She stated that these documents will then be available on other platforms for example the Open Data Platform which the DG Regio Evaluation Unit updates on a regular basis.

Ms. Toikka pointed out that this platform is subject to complete transparency for everyone throughout the EU which includes in excess of 500 million people who have access to it. She pointed out that the role of the EU Commission is to recommend and advise the Managing Authority on the Annual Implementation Report before it is officially submitted to the Commission. In conclusion Ms. Toikka stressed the importance of ensuring that an accurate update of progress under the priorities should be provided in final version of the AIR which is due for submission to the EU Commission by the end of May 2018. Ms. Elena Panteva, EU Commission, asked that values in the tables of the AIR should be provided where possible and if there are no values available clarifications should be given outlining the reasons together with any actions that need to be taken.

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, pointed out that implementation on ground of the OP has been excellent but reported that there is still some way to go in relation to expenditure drawdown. She explained that part of the reason that drawdown is slow on the EU Programmes is that the regulations in place are extremely complex and stated that Ireland's national submission to the post 2020 Cohesion Policy stresses this issue very clearly.

Ms Caulfield informed the members that this issue is a very common theme across other member states and pointed out that there are areas that would benefit from changes post 2020. She referred to the slow start under the 2014-2020 OP due partly to the delays on the eCohesion system which is now up and running. She pointed out that the European Social Fund (ESF) now has €148m declared on the eCohesion system and stated that she is confident that the ERDF fund will catch up and achieve its milestones. In conclusion she thanked DG Regio and the Managing Authority, and all involved in the cascade for their work and support to date.

#### **4. DRAFT ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION REPORT (AIR) 2017**

**Proposed by** Mr. Michael Hughes

**Seconded by** Ms. Nuala Dormer

*“That the Annual Implementation Report 2017 be approved”.*

The Annual Implementation Report 2017 was **APPROVED** and **AGREED** by all.

#### **5. HORIZONTAL PRINCIPLES**

Mr. Abed Aldakar, Equality and Human Rights Commission, reported briefly on gender equality and non-discrimination principles and informed the members that a detailed report on these issues would be submitted to the Managing Authority following the meeting. He thanked all the participating bodies for their work on the horizontal

principles and stated that the reporting is very positive for all the projects. He complemented Science Foundation Ireland on their reporting in particular and pointed out that this report could be used in the future as an example for others especially with regard to the data and targets reported and also the strategic planning around equality and gender specific issues. Mr. Aldakar asked that all participating bodies adhere to national policies and national equality legislation. He referred to section 42 of the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014 in particular and stressed the importance of an evidence-based approach in complying with the principles of gender equality and non-discrimination. Mr. Aldakar informed the members that the non-discrimination principle includes nine grounds which includes accessibility and again stressed the importance of demonstrating compliance with these nine grounds together with the gender specific principle.

Mr. Terry Dunne, Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, reported on the horizontal principle of sustainable development and the integration of the principle into the OP. He outlined the importance of increasing the public awareness of Ireland's sustainable development goals and pointed out the benefit of the monitoring committee meeting and reporting under this principle in keeping with our requirements and responsibilities. Mr. Dunne informed the meeting that in April this year Minister Naughton launched the first national sustainable development goals implementation plan for the period 2018-2020 and reported that the Minister will be presenting Ireland's first progress report, the 'Voluntary National Review', to the United Nations High Level political forum in July 2018. In conclusion he pointed out that his colleague who deals specifically with sustainable development goals would be happy to make a presentation to the members at the next monitoring committee meeting if they were interested. Mr. David Minton, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, stated that he would take the proposal for a presentation on board for the next Monitoring Committee meeting.

## **6. PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK**

Ms. Caitlin Conneely, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, explained that the Performance Framework Report was prepared jointly by the Managing Authorities for both the BMW and S&E Operational Programmes. She stated that this year is very important in terms of the performance framework and pointed out that the report was compiled to inform the monitoring committee members of the current position with regard to the implementation of the programme. Ms. Conneely explained that for the 2014-2020 programming period of the European Structural and Investment (ESI) Funds the performance framework has been included as a new compulsory element with an increased focus on results and outputs in assessing the impact of the OP.

She reported on the milestones and targets which were established during the programme development period which are monitored to keep the programme on track and ensure that the outputs are achieved for the objectives. Ms. Conneely informed the members that portion of the allocation for each priority axis, which is set aside until the performance review in 2019 amounts to 6% of the ERDF allocation at priority level. She stated that the performance reserve will be awarded or transferred based on whether the priority has achieved its milestones or not and pointed out that this performance will be assessed again in 2023 to establish if the final targets have been achieved. Ms. Conneely reported that the principal purpose of the performance framework is to

stimulate effective delivery of programmes to attain the planned results. She stated that under the two OPs in Ireland the selection rate is high and expenditure on the ground is high but pointed out that total amount of eligible expenditure declared is somewhat behind the projected milestone targets for some priorities.

Ms. Conneely informed the members that the performance framework includes financial and non-financial indicators with a number of indicators under each priority as outlined in the report. In terms of the legislation and the implementing regulation governing the performance framework she stated that there are consequences if we don't meet our milestones.

She reported that the performance review will be carried out by the EU Commission following the submission of the 2018 AIR by June of 2019. Ms. Conneely explained that the Commission has two months from the date of receipt of the AIR to examine the achievement of the milestones at priority level and determine for each Member State and ESI Fund, the programmes and priorities which have achieved their milestones.

Ms. Conneely outlined that a priority will be deemed to have achieved its milestone if there are no more than two indicators in the performance framework related to a priority and each indicator has achieved at least 85% of the milestone value by the end of 2018. If there are three or more indicators in the performance framework related to a priority all indicators except for one must have achieved at least 85% of the milestone value by the end of 2018 and the one indicator which has not achieved 85% of its milestone value must achieve at least 75%.

She explained that in situations where one or more priorities of a programme do not meet the milestones, the performance reserve related to those priorities may be still reallocated among the priorities which have achieved their milestones.

Ms. Conneely outlined that the Commission may suspend all or part of an interim payment of a priority following the performance review in 2019 if a priority has seriously failed to achieve the milestones relating only to financial indicators, output indicators and key implementation steps set out in the performance framework.

She informed the members that a priority will be deemed to have seriously failed to achieve the milestone in the following cases:

- if there are no more than two indicators in the performance framework related to a Priority and any of these two indicators has failed to achieve at least 65% of the milestone value by the end of 2018
- if there are more than two indicators in the performance framework related to a Priority and at least two of these indicators have failed to achieve at least 65% of the milestone value by the end of 2018.

She stated that the financial corrections in relation to the performance framework may only be applied by the Commission at the end of the programming period following examination of the final implementation report where there is a serious failure of performance and weaknesses.

Ms. Conneely reported on the implementation of the OP by the Managing Authority over the past year and outlined the key actions and deadlines which had been achieved before declarations could be made to the Commission. She reported that progress on the Operational Programme has been achieved across all priorities except for Priority 5. She informed the members that most schemes are progressing well on the ground in terms of expenditure and physical achievements of the outputs.

Ms. Conneely outlined briefly the progress under each Priority. Under Priority 1 she reported that progress is strong in terms of expenditure and impact. She stated that the Marine Institute scheme is currently being agreed and will contribute to the Priority from 2019. She informed the members that the output indicators under Priority 1 are very positive with some targets exceeded. She also reported that expenditure on the ground has been achieved in line with expenditure profiles but pointed out the delays which have been experienced in the drawdown declarations. Therefore, she pointed out that the total amount of eligible expenditure entered into the accounting system of the certifying authority and certified by the authority is somewhat behind the projected milestone targets for this priority. Under Priority 2, she reported that the key implementation step for the NBP has been achieved. Ms. Conneely outlined that implementation of Priority 3 is strong in terms of expenditure and impacts and she pointed out that the two milestones targets have been met. She stated that the expenditure on the ground is in line with the profile however the drawdown of eligible expenditure from the Commission is somewhat behind the projected milestone targets for this priority.

Under Priority 4, Ms. Conneely informed the members that the milestone target relating to the number of households with improved energy consumption classification has been significantly exceeded in both regions and expenditure on the ground has been strong. She stated that declarations on this priority are on target to meet, or exceed, the milestone target for 2018. She reported on the seven projects of the Designated Urban Centres Grant Scheme under Priority 5 and stated that these projects were selected through an open call to designated towns in 2015. Ms. Conneely outlined the delays experienced in relation to procurement and planning issues in getting these projects of the ground. However, she stated that she is confident that all these projects will be proceed with most of the works commencing in the second half of 2018 and into 2019. She reported that expenditure on the ground has been very low to date in the BMW Region, but stated that the bulk of the expenditure will be incurred in 2019. She also stated that as the financial milestone under this Priority will not be achieved in the BMW Region a revision of the milestone will need to be submitted to the EU Commission for approval by the end of June 2018.

Ms. Conneely explained that the regulations allow for Member States to propose a revision to the milestones and targets in duly justified cases which are set out in the regulations. She reported that progress on physical, non-financial milestone targets is on track in all Priorities, except Priority 5, showing the successful implementation of the Operational Programme in both regions.

Mr. Paul Herron, ERDF Audit Authority, queried the progress on the transfer of the data from the contingency system to the eCohesion system. Ms. Conneely pointed out that this will be a transfer of summary data which will be managed by the member state. Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield informed the members that the transfer of this data is at an

advance stage and outlined the delays with the eCohesion system and also thanked everyone involved in the development of the system. In response to a question from Ms. Elena Panteva, EU Commission, Paul Herron informed the members that the ERDF Audit Authority will be responsible for checking the transfer of data. Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, questioned the realistic timeframe of when the eCohesion system would be fully functional. Mr. Herron pointed out that this timeframe will need to be discussed in more detailed with the various authorities where a response can be prepared for the Commission following the meeting. Ms. Caitlin Conneely stated the Managing Authority will be working closely with the Audit Authority and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform in order to expedite this process and to ensure that all expenditure declaration targets are met.

## **7. AMENDMENTS TO THE OPERATIONAL PROGRAMME AND IMPLEMENTATION PLANS**

Mr. Michael O'Brien, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, briefly outlined the revised implementation plan proposals for the Marine Research Scheme. He informed the members that this proposal includes a total investment of €5m over the roll out period 2018-2020 which kick starts in 2018 with the industry led call. Mr. O'Brien pointed out that the proposed implementation plan sets out the criteria, the selection process and timeline together with the role of the Intermediate Body and financial management arrangements. He stated that there are still some queries outstanding which need to be clarified by the Marine Institute as the IB for this initiative and it is proposed to adopt this paper today pending receipt of these clarifications.

**Proposed by** Ms. Nuala Dormer  
**Seconded by** Mr. Michael Hughes

*“That the amendments to the Marine Research Scheme Implementation Plans, subject to receipt of clarifications from the Marine Institute, be approved”.*

The amendments to the Marine Research Scheme Implementation Plans, subject to receipt of clarifications from the Marine Institute, were **APPROVED** and **AGREED** by all.

## **8. COMMUNICATIONS**

Mr. David Minton, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, referred to the impact and level of awareness of the OP and informed the members of the terms of reference and proposed campaign by the Managing Authority to promote EU funds and celebrate the outputs and achievements of the BMW Regional OP.

Mr. Barry Guckian, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, gave a brief presentation on the information and publicity achievements to date of the OP and the planned activities over the next year. He explained that it is the Managing Authorities role to ensure that all EU regulations, guidelines and national rules relating to information and publicity are complied with. He informed the members of the workshops which have been run by the Managing Authority including a 2 day event held in portlaoise that covered at all the regulations including information and publicity.

Mr. Guckian also reported on the Managing Authorities role of promoting the BMW Regional OP and he presented a short video to highlight this. He informed the members of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly's newly redesigned website which was launched last year and requested all IB's to submit any case studies or photos that they have in order to keep the website updated.

He reported that the website received around 2,000 visitors over the last 3 months and he also highlighted the NWRA's social media platforms, which includes facebook, instagram and twitter, the most active platform. Mr. Guckian informed the members of the Assembly's newsletter which is produced with 422 people subscribed to this newsletter. He reported on the requirement to hold an information and publicity event annually which included the One Region One Vision Conference held in Galway last year and he showed a short video clip of the conference.

Mr. Guckian explained that Ireland is celebrating two anniversaries this year which includes Ireland's 45 years of EU Membership with a booklet produced by the EU Commission to highlight this. The other anniversary which is being celebrated across the Commission is the 30 years of Cohesion Policy where a range of material have been produced to celebrate this. He explained that the Managing Authority have decided to make Cohesion 30 the flagship communication project over the next year with the assistance of a PR company called Magnify. He stated that Magnify will assist with celebrating the impact of EU funding in the BMW Region by developing a media strategy, digital advertising and social media advertising to include a photo library.

Mr. Guckian reported on the Regional Assembly's presence in the EU tent at the annual ploughing championship, a large outdoor event where 300,000 people attended. In conclusion he presented a short video on the INFORM network mascot puppet called Noah who spent 6 months in Ireland to help promote EU funding and the video showed him visiting projects in the BMW Region.

## **9. FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS**

Mr. David Minton, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, explained that the Managing Authority currently has no plans in the current round of ERDF funding to develop financial instruments.

## **10. UPDATE ON:**

### **10.1 eCohesion IT System**

### **10.2 Evaluation update**

### **10.3 Closure 2007-2013**

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield, Department of Public Expenditure and Reform, informed the members that the eCohesion IT System was rolled out in 3 phases. She stated that the system is functioning well and reported on the independent assessment which was carried out with a recent final sign off on the system. She reported that a lot of training has been rolled out on the eCohesion system which the Managing Authority was involved in and stated that the system is now ready to use and pointed out that ESF now have €146m declared on the system.

Ms. Caitlin Conneely, Northern & Western Regional Assembly, explained that the Managing Authority is required to carry out a midterm evaluation of the OP as set out in EU Regulations. She stated that the purpose of the evaluation is to improve the quality and design of programmes to assess their effectiveness, efficiency and impact. Ms. Conneely pointed out that this midterm evaluation will be carried out jointly with the Southern Regional Assembly. She reported that the draft terms of reference are currently being finalised and the contracting authority for the evaluation will be the Southern Regional Assembly under the OGP framework. Ms. Conneely informed the members that the RFT will be issued shortly with the award of the tender planned for the end of June or beginning of July and the completion of the evaluation scheduled for the end of October. She stated that the outcome of the evaluation will be considered at the October Monitoring Committee meeting.

Mr. Barry Guckian gave a brief update on the closure of the 2007-2013 Operational Programme. He informed the members that the Managing Authority submitted the final implementation report to the EU Commission in March 2017. Following queries from the Commission in August and December 2017 a final revised version was submitted in February of this year with the closure letter from the Commission to follow shortly.

## **11. Any Other Business**

Ms. Merja Toikka, EU Commission, thanked everyone for their work to date with the Operational Programme. She thanked Barry Guckian for his communications presentation and in particular the short video he presented on the INFORM network puppet called Noah. With regard to post 2020 she outlined the new proposal which were issued by the Commission on the 2<sup>nd</sup> May this year with regard to the Multiannual Financial Framework. She explained the need to focus on the areas where the EU Commission is best placed to deliver post 2020. She informed the members that the Commission's proposal will be subject to interesting negotiations amongst the 27 member states and stated that the European Council and Parliament plan to have agreement before the European Parliament elections next year. She referred to the focus on research and innovation under the current programme and also the digital economy and the importance of achieving our milestone targets.

Ms. Toikka informed the members that the financial instruments which will be introduced under the next programme period will be more streamlined and simplified. She also reported that the ERDF Programme post 2020 will be closely linked to the European Semester Process. She stated that this process is very important as it produces an annual report on the economic and social facts and data of every member state and pointed out that the report on Ireland is publicly available since February this year. Ms. Toikka informed the members that the country specific recommendations which are adopted in July each year are also publicly available and pointed out that Ireland had very interesting country specific recommendations on innovation last year but stated that this year's recommendations are not available yet.

Ms. Toikka informed the members that there will be a continuation of ERDF funding under the next programme with a very small reduction. She stated that this will be in the region of €226 billion with €215 billion going towards investment for growth and jobs and pointed out that in the Commission proposal the cohesion fund is only €46

billion. Ms. Toikka highlighted that a smarter Europe to promote competitiveness, digital transformation, entrepreneurship and innovation will be the core focus going forward together with a cleaner Europe and clean energy and pointed out that Ireland still has challenges in this area. Ms. Toikka informed the members of the specific fund of €25 billion which will be available for reform support for all 27 member states under the next programming period.

She stated that the common provisions regulations which covers all European Structural and Investment fund programmes will see some modifications and will be available on the 29<sup>th</sup> May this year. She also informed the members that these modifications will be explained by DG Regio management who will visit each member state. In Ireland this event will be held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June in the European Commission representation office in Dublin where all relevant stakeholders will be invited. She invited the members to read the 2018 European Semester Country report for Ireland which is available on the Commission website. She also added that the country specific recommendations for Ireland 2018 will be available on the Commission website in June of this year. In conclusion she informed the members of the Atlantic Strategies which will be more concrete going forward and invited the members to follow the progress in this area.

## **12. Next Meeting**

Mr. David Minton stated that a date and the details of the next Monitoring Committee Meeting due to be held at the end of the 2018 year will be circulated to the members later in the year.

He thanked everyone for their contributions at the meeting and thanked the EU Commission members for attending the meeting.

The foregoing minutes are confirmed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Secretary

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **ANNEX 1**

### **ATTENDANCE LIST**

#### **MANAGING AUTHORITY – Northern & Western Regional Assembly**

Mr. David Minton (Director, NWRA)

Ms. Caitlín Conneely (Assistant Director, NWRA and Secretary to the Monitoring Committee)

#### **NATIONAL AUTHORITIES**

Ms. Anne Marie Caulfield      Department of Public Expenditure & Reform

Ms. Patricia Hennessy      Department of Public Expenditure & Reform

#### **INTERMEDIATE BODIES AND POLICY DEPARTMENTS**

Mr. Damien Clarke      Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine

Mr. Martin Corry      Enterprise Ireland

Mr. Michael Hughes      Enterprise Ireland

Mr. Eugene Daly      Enterprise Ireland

Ms. Joan Hynes      Science Foundation Ireland

Ms. Nuala Dormer      Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment

Ms. Siobhan Murphy      Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment

#### **REGIONAL and LOCAL INTERESTS**

Cllr. Catherine Fitzgerald      Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly

Mr. Enda Hogan      Southern Regional Assembly

Mr. Ian Brannigan      Western Development Commission

#### **SOCIAL PARTNERS**

Mr. Aidan Doyle      Sligo Chamber of Commerce

#### **HORIZONTAL INTERESTS**

Mr. Terry Dunne      Environment Policy Unit (DCCAIE)

Dr. Aedin Mc Loughlin      Non-governmental Environment pillar

Mr. Abed Aldakar      Equality & Human Rights Commission

#### **OTHER ESIF MANAGING AUTHORITIES**

Ms. Cathy Dolan      Department of Education and Skills (ESF)

Mr. Mark Feeney      Special EU Programmes Body

#### **NON-MEMBERS: ADVISORS**

Mr. Merja Toikka      EU Commission

Ms. Elena Panteva      EU Commission

#### **ERDF AUDIT AUTHORITY**

Mr. Paul Herron

ERDF Audit Authority

**NORTHERN & WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY STAFF**

Mr. Barry Guckian

Northern & Western Regional Assembly

Mr. Michael O'Brien

Northern & Western Regional Assembly

Ms. Gerardine Lafferty

Northern & Western Regional Assembly

Ms. Pauline Grennan

Northern & Western Regional Assembly