



Northern & Western Regional Assembly

MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN & WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY MEETING HELD ON 24TH JANUARY 2020 IN THE ASSEMBLY CHAMBER AT 11.00 AM

Present:

Cllr Declan Bree	Cllr David Maxwell	Cllr Gerry Murray
Cllr Donal Gilroy	Cllr Frank McBrearty	Cllr Jack Murray
Cllr Christy Hyland	Cllr Jimmy McClearn	Cllr Joe Sheridan
Cllr Donal Lyons	Cllr Brian McKenna	Cllr Enda Stenson
Cllr David Collins	Cllr Jarlath Munnelly	Cllr Enda McGloin,
Cllr Craig Lovett	Cllr Niall McNelis	Cllr Patrick McGowan,
	Cllr Justin Warnock	

Cllr Declan McDonnell **PRESIDED**

Apologies:

Cllr Sean Smith, Cllr John Caulfield, Cllr. Frank McBrearty, Cllr Enda McGloin, Cllr. Orla Leyden

Officials: Northern & Western Regional Assembly:

Mr David Minton (Director)
Mr Denis Kelly (Assistant Director & Senior Planner)
Mr Gerry Doyle (Assistant Director)
Mr Frank Flanagan (Senior Executive Planner)
Mr Conall McGettigan (Senior Executive Planner)

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting of Northern & Western Regional Assembly held 13th December 2019

Proposed by: Cllr Enda Stenson
Seconded by: Cllr Donal Gilroy
Resolved:

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on 13th December, 2019 be adopted”

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. Planning and Economic Development

• Decision to make the RSES under S24 of the Planning & Development Act 2000 (as amended)

Mr. Denis Kelly gave a presentation on the RSES process and outlined the next steps. He informed the meeting that all the decisions made by the Assembly at its last meeting in December were now included in the Draft RSES. These had been circulated to members earlier this week as the RSES.

The Environment Consultants have considered all the decisions made by the Assembly and propose a Natura Impact Report which inter-alia concluded that the RSES will not have any adverse impact on the integrity of our network of European Regional Designated Sites (Natura 2000).

The remaining action within the statutory process at this juncture is for the Assembly to formally make the RSES in accordance with the provisions of the Planning Act. This will require a resolution of the Assembly.

In anticipation of this, the Assembly have arranged options to publish public notices and upload the text of the RSES on its website. It will also be necessary to undertake a graphic design process in order to make the strategy visually consistent with similar strategies in the planning hierarchy. Following this, an official launch of the strategy will take place in April, this will include English and Irish versions of the document. A more definitive timeframe will emerge for our February meeting.

Proposed by: Cllr Enda Stenson

Seconded by: Cllr Donal Gilroy

Resolved:

“That in accordance with Section 24 of the Planning and Development Act and having considered the Directors Reports on the Proposed Material Amendments to the Draft RSES, the consequential environmental assessments (SEA/AA) and the Natura Impact Report to make the RSES for the Northern and Western Region today the 24th January, 2020.

The Cathaoirleach suggested that the strategy be launched regionally with the major event taking place in Galway and that the Director consider and advise at subsequent meeting of the Assembly.

4. Region in Transition: The Way Forward

The Director gave a brief outline of the above and commented that the identified deficits were recognized at a national level and would be part of the forthcoming Indecon Needs Analysis. It was proposed to launch the publication next week and targeted Press Releases will take place.

The Cathaoirleach noted that the proposed Dáil meeting has been postponed and suggested a new meeting be re-scheduled after the Senate elections, and Government formation.

It was also noted that the region in Transition should be held out as an important election issue for the Senate. It would be useful for the Assembly if copies of an Executive Summary were available for members to circulate during the important forthcoming election. The welfare and conditions of Councillors generally is also an election issue and members were urged to follow a unified approach in putting this very important matter on the Agenda.

5. BMW Regional Operational Programme Update

Mr. Gerry Doyle gave a presentation on the Regional Operational Programme and informed the meeting of the five priorities.

1. RTDI
2. ICT (NBP)
3. SME Support – Capacity Development
4. Low Carbon Economy – Warmer Homes
5. Sustainable Urban Development – Athlone, Monaghan, Sligo, Dundalk, Tullamore, Letterkenny, Galway

In all cases, the performance indicators have been excellent.

He stated that targets set out in the Operational Programme were being achieved.

There were queries raised in relation to the provision of designated people with Local Authorities to deal with EU funding applications. It was suggested by the Director, David Minton that the launch of the RSES could be used to promote funding applications.

The Cathaoirleach asked about the retrofitting of Local Authority housing. He was advised by Mr Doyle that the Dept of Planning, Housing and Local Government operate a retrofitting scheme for public housing and SEAI operates the Better Energy Warmer Homes Scheme for owners of private housing who are on low incomes.

6. Conferences/Training

Instead of attendance at Regions Week, consideration should be given to an alternative venue this year.

7. Correspondence

There was correspondence from Minister Murphy's office stating his intention to attend the meeting of Oireachtas members that had been planned for 22nd January, 2020.

8. Any other Business

Mr Minton updated Members regarding a follow-up meeting with MEPs and it was agreed that he would liaise further with MEPs for the region to arrange a date for a meeting.

The June meeting of the Northern and Western Regional Assembly has been re-scheduled to 12th June, 2020.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Date: _____