

**MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN & WESTERN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
MEETING HELD ON 24TH JULY 2020 IN ROSCOMMON COUNTY COUNCIL
CHAMBER AT 11.00 A.M.**

Present:

Cllr. Declan Bree	Cllr. Christy Hyland	Cllr. Niall McNelis
Cllr. Tim Broderick	Cllr. Craig Lovett	Cllr. Patrick McGowan
Cllr. John Caulfield	Cllr. Donal Lyons	Cllr. Brian McKenna
Cllr. David Collins	Cllr. Frank McBrearty	Cllr. Jimmy McClearn
Cllr. Donal Gilroy	Cllr. Orla Leydon	Cllr. Justin Warnock
Cllr. Jack Murray	Cllr. David Maxwell	Cllr. Jarlath Munnely
Cllr. Enda Stenson	Cllr. Joe Sheridan	Cllr. John Naughten

Cllr. Declan McDonnell **PRESIDED**

Apologies: Cllr. Enda McGloin, Cllr. Sean Smith, Mr Seamus Neely Designated Chief Executive, Mr Gerry Lavelle

Officials: Northern & Western Regional Assembly:

Mr David Minton (Director)
Mr Denis Kelly (Assistant Director)
Mr Gerry Doyle (Assistant Director)
Mr Frank Flanagan (Senior Executive Planner)
Mr Conall McGettigan (Senior Executive Planner)
Ms Kelly Muldoon (Clerical Officer)

1. **Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on 21st February 2020:**

Proposed by: Cllr. Donal Lyon

Seconded by: Cllr. Christy Hyland

Resolved:

“That the minutes of the meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on 21st February, 2020 be adopted”

2. **Matters Arising:**

There were no matters arising.

3. **Planning and Economic Development:**

Mr Denis Kelly advised that now that the RSES was made it was incumbent upon each planning authority to review their Development Plans to make them consistent

with the RSES and the NPF. He advised that this could be done through a variation to the Development Plan or through the preparation of a new Development Plan. He advised that the Assembly had received notification from Cavan, Leitrim, Galway and Roscommon County Councils that they proposed to prepare new plans and inviting submissions/observations to the pre-draft consultations. He advised that the closing date for submissions was as follows:

- Cavan CDP: Pre -Draft stage consultation ends on 14th Aug
- Galway CDP: Pre -Draft stage consultation ends on 10th Sept
- Leitrim CDP: Pre -Draft stage consultation ends on 12th August
- Roscommon CDP: Pre -Draft stage consultation ends on 31st July

Mr Kelly outlined that the consideration required of the Assembly was set out in the Planning and Development Act - it provided that submissions/observations were to include a report on matters that require consideration by the Planning Authority including:

- Policies of Govt/Minister in relation to national/regional population targets and the best distribution of residential devt. and related employment
- Promote consistency between housing, settlement and economic objectives in draft plan and core strategy with RSES
- Objectives of providing physical, economic and social infrastructure in a manner that promotes balanced regional development
- Best use of land – location, scale, density – to benefit from investment in transport infrastructure and public transport services
- Promote Sustainable transport services
- Promotion of measures to reduce Greenhouse Gas emissions and address adaptation to climate change

He advised that a report had been issued to each member in respect of each of the proposed development plan reviews and then he proceeded to give members a detailed briefing upon the contents of the reports using slides (See Appendix).

Proposed by: Cllr. Jimmy McClearn

Seconded by: Cllr. Enda Stenson

Resolved:

“that the Northern and Western Regional Assembly issue a submission to Roscommon County Council, Cavan County Council, Leitrim County Council and Galway County Council on their respective draft County Development Plans”

“that the Northern and Western Regional Assembly issue a submission to each of the following:

- *Roscommon County Council,*

- *Cavan County Council,*
- *Leitrim County Council and*
- *Galway County Council*

on their respective pre draft County Development Plan consultation in accordance with the individual reports circulated.

4. Programme for Government – Our Shared Future:

Mr David Minton outlined the Programme for Government and explained that chapter 6 on Regional Development would be covered by the RSES.

5. Consideration of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly’s Corporate Plan 2020-2024:

Mr David Minton presented the Northern & Western Regional Assembly’s Corporate Plan 2020-2024 and explained that its primary driver was sustainable regional growth. The Corporate Plan aligns with the cycle of the of Local, National and European plans and the RSES. It will enable Local Authorities to access National and European funds.

Cllr. Brian McKenna queried how Local Authorities could access funding as some Local Authorities have appointed a designated person to deal with EU funds but not all Local Authorities have this capacity.

Mr Minton acknowledge that each Local Authority is different and highlighted the Diploma in EU Funding established by the NWRA in 2016. Mr Minton suggested that each Local Authority have a designated team and that the NWRA could meet with representatives from Local Authorities to set up teams.

6. Adoption of the Programme of Work – 2020:

Mr David Minto presented the Progamme of Work 2020.

Proposed by: Cllr. Jack Murray

Seconded by: Cllr. David Maxwell

Resolved:

“That the Programme of Work 2020 for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly be adopted”

7. Consideration of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly’s Annual Financial Statement for the y/e 31st December 2019:

Mr. Gerry Doyle, Assistant Director gave a detailed overview of the Annual Financial Statement for y/e 31st December 2019. He stated that overall the Assembly was in a satisfactory financial position with an overall increase in reserves in 2019. He also stated that

there was an increase in income due to a number of factors including increased statutory demands and in income arising from increased project activity. Mr Doyle also explained that the NWRA negotiated a refund of pension contributions from the Department of Housing and Local Government which were paid in relation to a staff member who had been on secondment and subsequently joined the Assembly. He added that a payment was made by the Assembly to correct an error in the designated PRSI classification of another staff member. He stated that at the request of our Auditors a note had been appended to the accounts detailing the potential financial risk going forward of the consequences of the Covid pandemic.

Cllr. McDonnell also queried if funding provided annually for the programme visits trip in October which will not go ahead in 2020 would be carried forward.. Mr David Minton acknowledged the importance of such programme visits to expose members to best practices and that under the exceptional circumstances that funding provided in 2020 would be carried forward to next year.

Proposed by: Cllr Niall McNelis

Seconded by: Cllr Enda Stenson

Resolved:

“that the Annual Financial Statement for the Northern & Western Regional Assembly y/e 31st December 2019 be adopted”

8. **Adoption of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly’s Annual Report for the y/e 31st December 2019:**

Mr Gerry Doyle presented the Annual Report 2019 and acknowledged the RSES as a landmark achievement for the NWRA. Milestones set out in the Border, Midland and West Operational programme had also been achieved and ETC programmes had achieved substantial funding including two new programmes aimed at sustainability in agriculture.

Cllr. Jimmy McClearn acknowledged the work that went into the RSES and its aspirations. Cllr. McClearn suggested, going forward, the Regional Assembly, Local Authorities, Government and Opposition needed to work together to implement the key elements of the RSES.

Proposed by: Cllr Christy Hyland

Seconded by: Cllr John Caulfield

Resolved:

“that the Annual Report 2019 for the Northern & Western Regional be adopted”

9. **Correspondence:**

Mr David Minton noted that there was a correspondence from Sligo County Council informing the NWRA that their Corporate Plan was under review.

10. Any Other Business:

Cllr. Declan Bree queried if there were any other County Development Plans up for review and if the Regional Assembly would be consulted on such plans. Mr Denis Kelly clarified that any Local Authority reviewing their County Development plan is legally obliged to consult with the Regional Assembly

Cllr Frank McBrearty queried if Donegal County Council had been in contact regarding the review of their County Development Plan. In response Mr Kelly confirmed that their Senior Planner had conveyed verbally that Members were to be asked at their monthly meeting to undertake a review but that no formal notification in writing had been received from Donegal County Council. He advised that the Members would be notified on receipt of any further reviews.

Cllr. Christy Hyland asked if the executive had a presentation that they made to the West SPA regarding Travel to Work statistics and Mr Kelly stated they would check their records and forward same.

Cllr. Joe Sheridan queried how Members could add to the submissions issued by the NWRA on Draft County Development Plans. Mr Kelly clarified that upon receipt of notification of any Development Plan Reviews that the notification would be circulated to them and they could discuss with the executive. He advised that a report would be circulated to Members in advance of Assembly Meetings for Members consideration. He advised that should a notification be received and the closing date was in advance of an Assembly Meeting then the agreed procedure was to furnish the report to the Cathaoirleach for agreement and to make the submission as agreed with the Cathaoirleach and to bring it to the attention of the next available Assembly Meeting.

Cllr. Tim Broderick raised the issue of adequate Irish Water wastewater treatment facilities were not available to enable small developments in rural communities to develop and queried if the Assembly could bring any solution to this through collaboration with Irish Water. Mr Kelly explained that notwithstanding that the RSES had no major role in the determination of one off projects, the RSES includes objectives regarding the provision of site services to settlements, including small towns , villages and rural areas.

Cllr. David Collins reiterated the issues with wastewater treatment in rural Galway and suggested the platform of the Regional Assembly would be beneficial in discussions with Irish Water. Cllr. Jimmy McClearn stated that small villages and settlements could not exist without adequate services and the guidance from the NWRA would be welcome. Cllr. Donal Gilroy suggested that this was an issue for other counties also. Mr Kelly suggested that Frank Flanagan, Senior Executive Planner would liaise with Irish Water on behalf of the NWRA.

Mr David Minton informed the Members that the Designated Executive, Seamus Neely was stepping aside from Donegal County Council and the new Designated Executive to the NWRA was Brendan McGrath.

Cllr. Declan McDonnell suggested that a letter of thanks should be sent to Cllr Seamus Neely to acknowledge his work with the Regional Assembly.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: _____

Cathaoirleach

Date: _____