

**Present:**

Cllr. Declan Bree	Cllr. Tim Broderick	Cllr. Jimmy McClearn
Cllr. Donal Lyons	Cllr. Donal Gilroy	Cllr. Jack Murray
Cllr. Orla Leyden	Cllr. Enda Stenson	Cllr. Joe Sheridan
Cllr. John Naughten	Cllr. Patrick McGowan	Cllr. Enda McGloin
Cllr. David Maxwell	Cllr. Frank McBrearty	Cllr. David Collins
Cllr. Declan McDonnell	Cllr. Niall McNelis	Cllr. Justin Warnock
Cllr. Michael Crowe		

Cathaoirleach Christy Hyland took the chair until Agenda Item No. 4Aii when Leas Cathaoirleach Jimmy McClearn took over the Chair

**Apologies:** Cllr. Sean Smith, Cllr. John Caulfield, Cllr. Craig Lovett, Cllr. Jarlath Munnely, Cllr. Brian McKenna, Mr Brendan McGrath (Chief Executive Galway City Council)

**Officials: Northern & Western Regional Assembly:**

Mr David Minton (Director)  
Mr Denis Kelly (Assistant Director & Senior Planner)  
Mr Gerry Doyle (Assistant Director)  
Mr Patrick Devine (A/Senior Staff Officer)  
Mr John Daly (Economic and Sustainable Development Officer)  
Mr Conall McGettigan (Senior Executive Planner)  
Mr Frank Flanagan (Senior Executive Planner)  
Ms Catriona Meehan (Clerical Officer)

**1) Adoption of the Draft Supplementary Standing Orders regulating the proceedings of the Assembly when holding remote meetings**

**Proposed:** Cllr. Donal Lyons

**Seconded:** Cllr. David Maxwell

**Resolved:**

*“That the Draft Supplementary Standing Orders regulating the proceedings of the Assembly when holding remote meetings be adopted for the holding of this meeting.”*

**2) Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on the 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 (circulated):**

**Proposed by:** Cllr. Donal Lyons

**Seconded by:** Cllr. David Maxwell

**Resolved:**

*“That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on 25<sup>th</sup> March 2022 be adopted”.*

**3) Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

**4) Planning and Economic Development**

**a) Planning Reports**

**i. Proposed material Alterations to the Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2021- 2027 (Circulated)| (Presentation at Appendix 1)**

Mr Frank Flanagan gave a brief overview of the proposed Material Alterations to the Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2021-2027. He reminded members of the previous submission by the Assembly. Mr Flanagan advised that most observations from that submission were addressed, and a letter had been received that explained those that were not addressed. He said that there

was a high level of consistency between the Plan and the RSES, Mr Flanagan outlined rationale for recommendations outlined in the report.

**Proposed:** Cllr. Enda Stenson

**Seconded:** Cllr. Donal Lyons

**Resolved**

*'that members resolved to make a submission to the Draft Mayo County Development Plan 2021-2027 in accordance with the circulated report'*

Leas Cathaoirleach Jimmy McClearn took over the Chair.

**ii. Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023 – 2029 (Circulated) | (Presentation at Appendix 1)**

Mr Conall McGettigan gave a detailed presentation on the Draft Plan and advised that there was a very high level of consistency between the Plan and the RSES. He complimented the clear and concise format of the plan. Mr McGettigan showed examples of the maps used and added that these were a very beneficial addition to the plan. He explained some challenges that might impact the aims of the Plan including population drain and worker outflow to neighbouring counties. Mr McGettigan explained the observations and recommendations outlined in the proposed submission.

Comments and Questions from Members

- The issue of commercial forestry in the County was raised. It was stated that this was a huge issue for national planning.
- Population trends and the timeline since the last Census was highlighted as being a problem for the development plan.
- The issuing of a gold mining license was highlighted, it was noted that the licence is for an area of great natural beauty and was very disappointing.
- Members noted the issue of wind turbines in the County.
- It was noted that the lack of available housing would impact the objective to attract people back to the area.
- The rising price of construction was noted.
- It was noted that perhaps the forum on forestry needed to be set up as the County was being let down.

Mr McGettigan acknowledged the issues with forestry in the county stating that the report outlines that 20% of the County is in forestry. He stated that it was a pity the population figures from the Census were not available as it would form a clearer picture for planning. Mr Denis Kelly suggested that the forum on forestry could be looked at within the North Sligo/Leitrim Policy, he added that he would come back to members regarding this over the coming months.

**Proposed:** Cllr. Enda McGloin

**Seconded:** Cllr. Enda Stenson

**Resolved**

*'that members resolved to make a submission to the Draft Leitrim County Development Plan 2023-2029 in accordance with the circulated report'*

**5) EU Funding Network**

**EU Funds Update (Presentation at Appendix 2)**

Mr David Minton advised that there were a number of open calls which Mr Devine would outline in this presentation. He added that all questions were welcome.

Mr Patrick Devine presented an update on the various EU Funds. He emphasized the inter-regional learning and the learning through cooperation which has developed from the cross-boundary relationships. He said that these bonds were invaluable when addressing shared challenges. Mr Devine stated that the first call for projects had been made and that all Local Authorities had been contacted. He explained to Members that each LA was invited to engage with the Assembly and establish an EU Funding

strategy which best suited them. Mr Devine informed Members that it was hoped that more smaller workshops would be run with different focal point. He highlighted the successful launch of the new EU funds strategy adding that if anyone missed the launch the recording of the event could be sent to them.

#### Members Contributions

- There were queries regarding the level of participation by some Local Authorities, some were noted as not having had their initial summary call with the NWRA.
- There were compliments on the launch event, and it was noted that it was well attended.
- Members noted that not all Local Authorities had the resources to devote someone full time to EU projects, but it was hoped that this would change in the future.

Mr Minton stated that all Local Authorities had made contact but that there had been scheduling issues for some around setting up meetings. He advised that each Local Authority had a different capacity to engage with these initiatives.

Mr Devine agreed with members regarding the fact that some Local Authorities did not have full time EU Officers, but he hoped that with more knowledge of the projects and the benefits that they can bring it is hoped that more Local Authorities will dedicate more resources to EU Projects. Mr Devine stated that the work and research and knowledge that goes into these projects often leads to additional National Funding. He added that anyone who had registered, but not attended, had been sent on the link for the recording.

#### **6) Correspondence**

##### **Brussels Programme Visit – June 2022**

Mr David Minton informed members that there would be a Programme Delegation trip to Brussels in June. He stated that expressions of interest had been received but that the details on numbers attending had not been confirmed. He stated that there might be limitations on numbers, but it was hoped that perhaps attendance on this trip and that at Regions Week in October could be balanced. Mr Minton stated that the Agenda would relate to Climate Change, Regional Development, Smart Villages and Cities. He responded to queries about the date of the proposed trip stating that it was proposed that the trip would be between the 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> of June. Mr Minton stated that further clarification would be sought, and members would be kept informed.

Mr Minton advised that he had written to the Taoiseach and Tánaiste regarding the hosting of a proposed delegation however the meeting had not been formalised. He added that perhaps Members could liaise with their own contact to encourage engagement. Mr Minton stated that an Agenda could be confirmed with members in advance of the meeting.

Mr Gerry Doyle explained that an email had been sent to the relevant Department clarifying the Motion passed at February's meeting, however no further correspondence regarding the motion had been received.

#### **7) Any Other Business**

Cllr. David Collins enquired about the establishment of a subcommittee, last year, regarding the NWRA building. He stated that he didn't think the Committee had ever met due to the pandemic, but he enquired of the need for the subcommittee in current times.

Cllr. Frank McBrearty stated that the price of steel has almost tripled in the last six months and has led to some steel plants considering closing, he raised the question whether there was another recession on the horizon as construction is usually the first to feel the effects. Cllr. McBrearty asked for Mr John Daly to compile a report on the economic situation at present and the possibility of another recession soon.

Mr David Minton stated that NWRA requirements relating to this building are under review and that the sub-Committee should meet to discuss same. He explained that there were many factors that had to be considered in particular, the existing lease on the building, the condition of the building, the energy rating

status of the building and the changes to working practices that have been brought about by Covid-19. Mr Minton stated that it was now time to review the operating model and decide which best suits NWRA. He added that at the establishment of the NWRA it was specified that the HQ must be located in Ballaghderreen. Mr Minton stated that there would need to be discussions with the Department of Housing and Local Government with regards to the options going forward. He stated that perhaps a proposal could be brought to the Members in the coming months regarding the options after discussion with the sub-Committee.

Mr Minton stated that Mr John Daly could prepare a presentation for the next meeting regarding the current economic climate and could possibly give some thoughts on forecasts for the economy in the near future.

The next meeting will be held on the 20<sup>th</sup> of May 2022

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Cathaoirleach)

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