

**Minutes of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly Meeting
held on 21st of July 2023 at 11am in Roscommon Chamber.**

Present:

Cllr. Enda McGloin	Cllr. Tim Broderick	Cllr. Jimmy McClearn
Cllr. John Caulfield	Cllr. Declan Bree	Cllr. Joe Sheridan
Cllr. Orla Leyden	Cllr. Clifford Kelly	Cllr. Christy Hyland
Cllr. Donal Gilroy	Cllr. Justin Warnock	Cllr. Declan McDonnell
Cllr. Jack Murray	Cllr. Donal Lyons	Cllr. David Maxwell
Cllr. Enda Stenson	Cllr. John Naughten,	Cllr. Jarlath Munnelly

Presided: Cllr. David Collins (Cathaoirleach)

Apologies: Cllr. Michael Crowe, Cllr. Frank McBrearty, Cllr. Patric McGowan, Cllr. Brian McKenna, Cllr. Niall McNelis, Cllr. Áine Smith.

Officials: Northern & Western Regional Assembly:

Mr. Denis Kelly (Director)
Mr. Gerry Doyle (Assistant Director)
Mr. Frank Flanagan (A/Assistant Director / Senior Planner)
Mr. Brendan Mooney (A/Assistant Director)
Ms Teresa Hooks (Programme Executive)
Mr. Patrick Devine (Programme Executive)
Mr Barry Guckian (Programme Executive)
Ms. Elayne Sinclair (Clerical Officer)
Ms. Eileen McSweeney (Clerical Officer)

1) Adoption of the Minutes of the Meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on 16th June 2023 (Circulated):

Proposed by: Cllr Donal Lyons

Seconded by: Cllr Orla Leyden

And unanimously resolved that:

“That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly held on 16th June be adopted”.

2) Matters Arising

The Cathaoirleach offered his condolences to the family of NWRA economist John Daly on the passing of his father.

Cllr McDonnell also proposed a vote of sympathy to Cllr. Lyons on the death of his brother.

Motion

Proposed: Cllr Declan McDonnell

Seconded: Cllr Donal Gilroy and

Unanimously agreed that:

‘the Northern and Western Regional Assembly extend their deepest sympathy to John Daly, NWRA on the passing of his father and to Cllr. Donal Lyons on the passing of his brother.’

3) Director’s Update

Mr Denis Kelly introduced and welcomed three new NWRA staff members – Eimear Dowd, Regional Development Manager, Eileen Mc Sweeney, Clerical Officer and Elayne Sinclair, Clerical Officer.

He advised members of a request for funding relating to the part funding of a marketing position relating to the newly created gaming centre at the Strand Campus in Strandhill. The Marketing officer will assist in promoting the centre as a digitally connected innovation corridor connecting existing, emerging and new incubation spaces that will attract businesses and industries working in the digital economy and creative industries. This would entail funding of circa €20-€25,000 a year for 2 years. A memorandum of understanding is to be created.

Motion

Proposed: Cllr Donal Gilroy

Seconded: Cllr. Declan Bree and

Unanimously agreed that:

‘the Northern and Western Regional Assembly would provide funding in the sum of €40-€50,000 spread over 2 years for a marketing post at the Strand Campus following the memorandum of understanding.’

Mr. Kelly introduced the NWRA’s new bilingual logo.

Mr Gerry Doyle, Assistant Director presented members with several options for study visits in 2023 which are included as Appendix 1 to these minutes.

- Region’s Week Brussels - 9-12 October with 200+sessions covering multiple area of interest.
- Intereg Atlantic Area Annual Event, Porto - 18th October showcasing various projects completed in the area.
- Interreg NPA annual event focusing on how Northern Periphery and Arctic cooperation projects can support reskilling, attracting and retaining the needed workforce. – Skelleftea, Sweden
- Intereg Europe Annual Event, Santiago de Compostella 25-27 October
- NPA Secretariat in Copenhagen
- Council of Europe/European Parliament, Strasbourg
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Mr Doyle stated if members were interested in Region’s week, it would have to be reserved asap.

Comments from Members:

Cllr. Leydon stated that she would like to see projects from similar region to ours. She felt it would be beneficial to bring back ideas from these projects eg. relating to sustainable tourism.

Cllr. Sheridan expressed an interested in the NPA annual event referencing offshore licencing. He felt this event would provide an insight into a five and ten-year scope.

Cllr Murray advised that the ERNACT network included a partner in Sweden and perhaps they have a project of interest.

Cllr McDonnell stated it was too late to think about Region's week. He suggested they choose an alternative option.

Cllr. Gilroy suggested adding additional events on to a short visit to make it more feasible to travel. David Maxwell agreed with this.

Several members expressed interest in the NPA event in Skelleftea with a show of hands. Denis Kelly, Director advised that this option would be further explored and discussed with the Cathaoirleach and Chairs of the SPAs.

4) ERDF Programme 21/27 Update

Ms. Teresa Hooks, Programme Executive, updated the Assembly Members on the Northern and Western €217m ERDF Regional Programme focusing on Priority 1, A Smarter Europe, which will drive EU investments in the 2021-2027 programming period. Members were updated on the status of all the Priority 1 Schemes in the 2021-2027 Regional Programme.

The presentation is included as Appendix 2 to these minutes.

Comments and Questions

Cllr John Naughten thanked Teresa Hooks for the presentation and stated it was good to see schemes open for people to apply to. We need investment to encourage people to stay and work in their region.

Cllr. David Collins asked was Priority 2 being run by the Local Authorities.

Cllr. Donal Gilroy asked about the schemes ability to meet the demands for the services funded.

Responses:

Brendan Mooney, Acting Assistant Director confirmed that Priority 2 was a scheme operated by the Sustainable Energy Authority of Ireland (SEAI)

Brendan Mooney confirmed capacity was discussed at programme design phase and that the Better Energy Warmer Home Scheme in the 2014/2020 Programme had drawn down its full ERDF allocation.

5) Planning and Economic Development

Frank Flanagan updated the Assembly on the Material Alterations to the Tuam LAP

The presentation slides are included as Appendix 3 to these minutes.

Comments and Questions

Cllr Sheridan talked about the zoning tax citing bad PR and a lack of information in urban areas for people.

Motion

Proposed: Cllr Joe Sheridan

Seconded: Cllr. Cllr Declan McDonnell

Unanimously agreed that:

‘the Northern and Western Regional Assembly would make a submission in line with the report issued on July 17th.’

6) Correspondence

Mr Gerry Doyle, Assistant Director outlined the various pieces correspondence received, which had been circulated to members.

Cllr Mc Donnell suggested that the Assembly travel to Dublin to meet with the Minister for Transport.

Motion

Proposed: Cllr Declan McDonnell

Seconded: Cllr. Sheridan and Cllr Naughten

Unanimously agreed that:

‘the Northern and Western Regional Assembly would travel to Dublin to meet with the Minister for Transport.’

Cllr McDonnell suggested the meeting with the MEPs be on a separate date from the monthly meeting. Given that Colm Markey MEP and Chris McManus MEP had indicated their availability for the 22nd of September it was agreed to proceed with that date for a special meeting with the MEPs.

Cllr David Maxwell requested that the unanswered invitation to Luke Flanagan MEP be reissued. Gerry Doyle, Assistant Director confirmed that he would do this.

7) Any other Business

The meeting concluded at 12:08

Signed: _____ (Cathaoirleach)

Date: _____