



MID-WEST REGIONAL AUTHORITY
Údarás Réigiúnach an Mhean-Iarthair

**PROGRAMME OF WORK (PoW) IN RESPECT OF YEAR ENDING 31st
DECEMBER 2012**

Clár Oibre don bhliain dár críoch 31 Nollaig 2012.

**ADOPTED AT MEETING OF THE AUTHORITY HELD ON 7th December
2012**

Glactha ag Cruinniú an Údaráis ar 7ú Nollaig 2011

Sínithe: _____

Cathaoirleach

Comhshínithe: _____

Stiúrthóir

1. Establishment & Statutory Remit

- 1.1 The Regional Authority was established under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order, 1993 and currently comprises 27 elected members. The functional area of the Regional Authority covers three counties with four constituent local authorities in the Mid-West of Ireland - Clare, Limerick City, Limerick County and North Tipperary. The functional area contains approximately 8,249 km² with a population of 378.410, approximately 8.26% of Ireland's population.
- 1.2 The primary role of the Regional Authority is in the promotion of co-ordination in the provision of public services in the region, including the promotion of co-operation and joint action between local authorities, public authorities and other bodies. The Authority has responsibility to make and implement Regional Planning Guidelines and review the provision of public services and the overall development needs of the region. Furthermore, the Authority has responsibility to provide proposals, advice, information and recommendations to National Government for the purposes of plans and programmes relating to EU assistance and to review the implementation in the region of measures for which EU assistance is made available.

2. Objectives

Having regard to the provisions of the Establishment Order, which set out the powers, functions and duties of Regional Authorities and matters to which Regional Authorities shall have regard, the Authority has the following objectives, the implementation of which form the basis of this Programme of Works (PoW) for 2012¹:

- 2.1 Promote co-ordination in the provision of public services in the Mid-West region.
- 2.2 Promote co-ordination and, where appropriate, co-operation, joint action, joint arrangements, agreements, communication and consultation between the local authorities and the other public authorities in the region.
- 2.3 Promote co-ordination, consistency and compatibility with the programmes, plans, policies, proposals and objectives of Government or any Government Minister.
- 2.4 Promote consideration by public authorities of the implications for, or the effects of, their decisions, activities or services on, the region as a whole.
- 2.5 Review the overall development needs of the region and make statements as appropriate on same.
- 2.6 Review Development Plans of the local authorities in the region, and in adjoining regions as appropriate, with a view to promoting consistency and a regard for the development requirements of the region.
- 2.7 Implement the National Spatial Strategy (NSS) at regional level through implementation of the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 in consultation with local planning authorities and other statutory agencies.

¹ Census 2011 Preliminary Data

- 2.8 Keep under review the provision of public services in, or relating to, or affecting, the region.
- 2.9 Make statements as appropriate on matters relating to the functions of the Authority as may be requested by the Minister for the Environment, Community and Local Government or a constituent authority.
- 2.10 Promote the objective of achieving uniform regional boundaries as far as practicable for public services.
- 2.11 Provide such proposals, recommendations, advice or information as may be required by the Minister for Finance or by any other Minister in connection with the preparation of any plan, programme or other measure for the purpose of making or supporting an application to the EU for financial assistance.
- 2.12 Review, at the request of the Minister for Finance, the implementation in the region of measures in respect of which financial assistance is made available by the European Union.
- 2.13 Review, in accordance with such terms, conditions, procedures or requirements that may be specified by the Minister for Finance, the operation of the National Development Plan and the National Strategic Reference Framework as respects the region and having regard to the development needs of the region.
- 2.14 Promote links and co-operation with the Southern and Eastern Regional Assembly, and provide such support as may be required to the six Authority members that are members of the Assembly, with respect to the powers, functions and duties of the Regional Assembly.
- 2.15 Promote and support regional socio-economic development at all levels in cooperation with local and public authorities and other actors in the regional economy.

3. Strategy and Action

The Regional Authority intends to implement the following PoW over the course of the year ending 31st December 2012:

- 3.1 Co-operate with, and promote co-ordination of, activities of public service providers and other agencies, including national enterprise support agencies, Shannon Development, Limerick Regeneration Companies, County Enterprise Boards (CEBs), Development Companies, County Development Boards (CDBs), etc.
- 3.2 Review the economic needs of the region and promote the region's case for an adequate and greater share of EU assistance and national economic investment. Implement the recommendations of the Regional Competitiveness Agenda and of the Regional Economic Strategy. Continue to press the region's case with National Government. Work to ensure that the development needs and priorities of the Mid-West are addressed and prioritised, as appropriate, in the implementation of the National Development Plan (NDP) and National Strategic Reference Framework (NSRF) 2007-2013.
- 3.3 Make submissions on behalf of the region to the relevant authorities as appropriate on various public policy matters.

- 3.4 Through the implementation of the RPGs and the Mid-West Area Strategic Plan (M.W.A.S.P.), promote and press the need for investment in, and improvement of, the region's strategic infrastructure in road, rail, port, air, water supply and waste water infrastructure.
- 3.5 Continue to contribute to and support the work of the Lough Derg Marketing Strategy Committee to ensure a coherent marketing strategy for the Lough Derg catchment area, which is a key regional and national resource.
- 3.6 Continue to contribute to and support the work of the Mid West Senior Planner's Group.
- 3.7 Continue to contribute to and support the work of the Shannon Estuary Integrated Framework Plan preparation.
- 3.8 Continue to contribute to and support the work of the Mid West Recreational Strategy preparation.
- 3.9 Contribute to and continue to provide Secretariat function to the Shannon Airport Marketing Consultative Committee to ensure the future viability of this vital international transport link for the Mid-West and neighbouring regions.
- 3.10 Monitor and coordinate the implementation of the NSS through implementation of the Mid-West Regional Planning Guidelines 2010-2022 prepared by the Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000 - 2010. As agreed by the Regional Authority members at the October 2010 meeting and agreed with the region's City and County Managers, the proposed **RPG Implementation Structure** is as follows:

Sub Group 1 - Coordinated Development of Zone 1 Area (to include support of the implementation of the Limerick Regeneration project)

The work of this Sub Group is being implemented through:

- M.W.A.S.P preparation and implementation
- Atlantic Gateway Corridor Framework finalisation
- Mid-West Retail Strategy
- Joint Housing Strategy
- Gateway Innovation Fund (G.I.F.)
- Atlantic Way Infrastructure and Connectivity Pillar
- Joint Recreational Strategy
- Joint Limerick City and County Economic Development Committee
- Limerick Regeneration Programme Delivery Group

Sub Group 2 - Development of the region's Renewable Energy resources

The regional Climate Change Strategy and Biomass Strategy have been completed and adopted by the Regional Authority. The Strategy highlights that the region is very suited to biomass and other renewable energy generation and also highlights the job creation

capacity that this industry has for the region. A Mid West Energy Strategy will be prepared during 2012.

Sub Group 3 – Development of the region’s Infrastructure

The work of this Sub Group will focus on the provision of roads, rail and other forms of regional access, the provision of Broadband infrastructure, the development of the role of Shannon International Airport, the development of the economic potential of the Shannon Estuary and its Ports and the provision of key water and wastewater infrastructure throughout the region.

- 3.11 Promote the objectives set out in the ‘Atlantic Gateways’ report , which explores the potential for greater linkages between the ‘Gateway’ cities of Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford in the interest of promoting balanced regional development.
- 3.12 Support the work of Limerick-City and County Economic Development Committee, in particular the Infrastructure sub-committee which is chaired by the Director, in relation to the growth and development of the Gateway.
- 3.13 Work with the Higher Education Institutes, enterprise support agencies and other key actors to enhance the level of innovation and entrepreneurial activity and economic development in the Mid-West Region.
- 3.14 Continue the work on the 6 no. EU Projects with which the Regional Authority is currently involved, including FRESH, WEASTFlows, Diego, InnovateTRAP and Parks Atlantic. The Authority will work proactively with local, national and EU project partners to ensure that the benefits for the region are realised to their fullest extent and to promote the Mid-West Region at an EU level.
- 3.15 Promote and participate in other relevant EU part-funded programmes for the benefit of the region, e.g. INTERREG IV, FP7. Encourage, assist and co-operate with local and public authorities in the region in sourcing and participating in EU programmes and projects, and in generally seeking to maximise the uptake of EU assistance by the region.
- 3.16 Support the continued implementation of the Mid-West Tourism and Economic Development Plan and work with regional agencies such as Shannon Development to ensure the Mid-West Region continues to attract a large share of both national and international visitors.
- 3.17 Consult, assist, support and co-operate with the Members of the EU Committee of the Regions (CoR) in the region in order to enhance participation in the EU policy process. Support the work of the Irish Regions Office in Brussels.
- 3.18 In accordance with the development of the Mid-West Economic Factfile, developed by the Authority in 2009, promote the Mid-West region as an attractive location for inward industrial investment. In this regard consult and co-operate with the local authorities, national and regional industrial and economic support agencies.

- 3.19 Provide a strong and effective voice articulating the challenges and needs of the Mid-West region. Forcefully present the region's case to National Government and state agencies, and develop and promote links with the region's public representatives in the Oireachtas, the European Parliament and the EU CoR. Provide information on its policies, objectives and activities through effective communication with local and public authorities and with the public through its website (www.mwra.ie), the media, publications, information seminars and other channels, as appropriate.
- 3.20 Any other priorities/work areas that the Regional Authority members may decide upon during the year 2011.

4. Implementation & Resources

- 4.1 The Authority will carry out its functions and its PoW for 2012 having regard to the general welfare and development of the Region, including -
- its physical, economic, social, demographic, infrastructural and environmental characteristics, its development potential and the protection and improvement of its environmental, heritage and cultural resources including arts and heritage facilities.
 - the programmes, plans, policies, proposals and objectives of National Government and any Government Minister and of local authorities and other relevant public authorities.
 - the resources that are available, or are likely to be available, for the provision of public services and the need to secure the most beneficial, effective and efficient use of such resources.
 - the implications for other regions of the services of public authorities in or relating to the region.
- 4.2 The Authority will strive to maintain and continuously improve a culture of learning/development amongst staff by promoting involvement and participation in further education, training & development.
- 4.3 In accordance with the objectives set out in the Government's Energy White Paper² the Authority will strive to perform its duties and responsibilities in as energy efficient a manner as possible so as to contribute to the national target of 33% energy savings across the public sector by 2020.
- 4.4 The Authority will implement this PoW within the resources available under its adopted Budget for year ending 31st December 2012 and such other resources as may be available to it during the year.

² Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources (2007). Government White Paper: Delivering a Sustainable Energy Future for Ireland.