

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Regional Authority held at 1.30 P.M. on Tuesday 7th October 2008 in the Council Chamber, North Tipperary County Council, Civic Offices, Nenagh.

Cllr. B. Hanrahan, Cathaoirleach, presided.

In attendance:

Clare Co. Co.

Cllrs. P. Considine, J. Crowe, B. Hanrahan, M. Kelly, and M. Taylor/Quinn.

Limerick City Co.

Cllrs. M. Byrne, J. Cronin, G. Fahey, J. Houlihan, P. Kennedy and L. Wallace.

Limerick Co. Co.

Cllrs. R. Brennan, E. Creighton, L. Enright, J. Houlihan, C. Hurley, E. Wade and L. Walsh.

North Tipperary Co. Co.

Cllrs. T. Berkery, W. Kennedy, J. Sheehy and M. Smith.

Apologies:

Cllr. M. Ryan.

Absent.

Cllrs. C Crowe, M. Lafferty, P. McMahon and J. Ryan.

Also Present.

Mr. L. Conneally, Director.

Mr. A Fleming, Designated Manager.

Mr. S. Treacy, Staff Officer.

At the outset of the meeting it was agreed to suspend Standing Orders to discuss the decision by Aer Lingus to withdraw the basing of Cabin Crews at Shannon Airport and alternatively to use American based cabin crews on transatlantic flights and to outsource baggage handling services.

Many Members expressed disappointment at this decision by Aer Lingus particularly so soon after the withdrawal of the Shannon/Heathrow services. They pointed out that it was vital for the economy of Shannon Airport and the wider Mid West Region that Aer Lingus maintain a presence at Shannon Airport.

The following resolutions were unanimously adopted by the Members:

“That the Mid West Regional Authority calls on the Government to intervene and show decisive leadership to ensure that the drastic proposals from Aer Lingus that will have further major negative consequences and further job losses for Shannon Airport are overturned in line with Government Policy of Balanced Regional Development and the National Spatial Strategy”.

“We propose that this Authority request a meeting with the Minister for Transport and the government nominees on the board of Aer Lingus to discuss the dramatic announcement by the management of Aer Lingus relating specifically to Shannon Airport and its potential negative impact on the workforce at the Airport and the region”.

It was agreed to write to Mr. Noel Dempsey T.D., Minister for Transport and Mr. Dermot Mannion, CEO, Aer Lingus in this regard.

The Members also agreed that the Mid West Regional Authority would hold a special meeting in Shannon to meet with Aer Lingus worker representatives and management.

1. Minutes

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 2nd September 2008 were proposed by Cllr. E. Creighton, seconded by Cllr. J. Cronin and agreed as presented.

The Minutes of the Finance/Conference Sub Committee held on 2nd September 2008 (prior to the monthly meeting) were proposed by Cllr. J. Sheehy, seconded by Cllr. E. Creighton and agreed as presented.

2. Correspondence.

The Members noted the following correspondence copy of which was circulated with the Agenda;

(A) Letter dated 4th September 2008 from Tullamore Town Council re; Review of Tullamore and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010-Preparation of Tullamore and Environs development Plan 2010-2016.

(B) Letter dated 17th September 2008 from Tullamore Town Council re; Review of Tullamore and Environs Development Plan 2004-2010-Preparation of Tullamore and Environs development Plan 2010-2016.

(C) Letter dated 18th September 2008 from Cork County Council re Planning and Development Act 2000 and Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004.

(D) Letter dated 24th September 2008 from Waterford County Council re: Planning and Development Act 2000-2006 Proposed Variation (No 10) of the Waterford County development Plan 2005-2011.

(E) Letter dated 10th September 2008 from Longford County Council re: Draft Longford Town Development Plan 2008.

(F) Letter dated 12th September 2008 from Midleton Town Council re Draft Midleton Development Plan 2009-2015.

(G) Letter dated 8th September 2008 from Carlow County Council re; County Carlow Draft Development Plan 2009-2015 Planning & Development Act 2000-2002 and Planning & Development (Strategic Environment Assessment) Regulations, 2004.

The Members also noted the following correspondence:

(A) Acknowledgement dated 6th October 2008 from the Minister for Health and Children to letter dated 30th September 2008 regarding resolution requesting consultation on health matters in the Mid West Region.

(B) Letter dated 26th September 2008 from Carlow Co. Co. re: Variation (No.7) Carlow Town Development Plan 2003(Removal of Architectural Conservation Area Objective from Carlow Town Development Plan (at Barrack Street).

(C) Letter dated 1st October 2008 from Limerick Co. Co. re; proposed Variation to Limerick County Development Plan 2005-2011.

(D) Letter dated 24th September 2008 from Waterford county Council re: Planning and Development Act 2000-2006: Proposed Variation (No. 10) of the Waterford County Development Plan 2005-2011.

3. Preparation of Estimates 2009.

The Director informed the meeting that he would be preparing Draft Estimates for the November monthly meeting. He also stated that the Finance/Conference Sub Committee would meet to examine the Draft Estimates in advance of the monthly meeting.

4. Shannon River Basin District Project-Presentation by Dr. Alan Barr.

The Cathaoirleach then introduced Dr. Alan Barr Shannon River Basin Project Consultant who made a power point presentation under the following headings:

- Water Framework Directive (WFD).
- WFD Timetable.
- Overview of the Draft Shannon River Basis District Plan.

- Status and Objectives
 - Enable protected areas to achieve their stricter water quality status standards.
 - Prevent deterioration, and particular maintain high or good water quality status.
 - Improve waters where appropriate to achieve at least good water quality standards.
 - Progressively reduce chemical pollution.

- Basic Measures Effectiveness.

- Alternative Supplementary Measures.
 - Wastewater, Industry and other Point Sources.
 - Forestry.
 - Agriculture
 - Unsewered Properties
 - Morphology
 - Abstractions
 - Research

- Strategic Environmental Assessment- What is involved?

- Timeframe
 - Draft RBMP 22nd December 2008
 - Public Consultation Jan/June 2009
 - Final RBMP 16th October 2009
 - First 6 year Planning Cycle 2010-2015

Dr. Barr then answered questions from the Members.

Among the issues raised were:

The impact of landslides, caused by the construction of Wind Farms, on water quality.

Will River Basin Management Plans include restriction on development in certain areas.

Development Plans currently being reviewed but Members not aware of implications of Shannon River Basin Management Plan.

Local Authorities do not have the financial resources to meet its obligations under the Plan and resources should come from Central Government. Water Infrastructural Projects being deferred through lack of funding.

In reply A. Barr stated that there will be new regulations regarding the provision of Wind Farms, Local Authorities will have to debate and approve the SRBP Management Plan which must inform Statutory Development Plans.

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation would be circulated to each Member of the Authority

5. Mid Shannon Tourism Investment Scheme-Presentation by Mr. John Crowe, Shannon Development.

The Cathaoirleach then introduced John Crowe who made a power point presentation on the Mid Shannon Tourism Investment Scheme under the following headings:

- Rationale
- Objective
- Scheme Overview
- Mid Shannon Scheme-legislation
- Mid Shannon Scheme-The Relief
- Eligible Activities
- Eligible Accommodation Elements
- Ineligible Activities
- State Aid Rules
- Potential Opportunities

He then answered questions from the Members.

Among the issues raised were:

Is proposed tax scheme complimentary to existing grant aided schemes ?-
Projects cannot be double funded.

Are Walkways eligible under the scheme ?-does not qualify but can be grant aided.

Level of interest in Scheme-10 consultation sessions-no application to date.

Duration of scheme-3years June 2008 June2011-Application before 31st May 2008.

It was agreed that a copy of the presentation would be circulated to each Member.

6. Launch of Website-Minutes of Monthly Meetings.

The Director informed the meeting that the new fully accessible Mid West Regional Authority Website had been officially launched at the Citizen First Conference in Ennis on 25th September 2008. He stated that the Minutes of the Monthly Meetings will be uploaded on the Website when they have been adopted.

He thanked Marie Collins, Projects Officer, for her input in getting the new Website operational.

7. Conferences

(A) Annual Conference 2009.

The Director advised the Members that the Annual Conference will be held on Thursday 19th and Friday 20th February 2009 in the Woodlands Hotel, Adare, Co. Limerick.

(B) Attendance at Conferences.

The attendance of Members at the following conferences was noted and approved.

Association of Irish Regions 11th Annual Conference on 17th October 2008 in the Inchydoney Island Lodge & Spa hotel, Clonakilty, Co. Cork-Cllr. P. Considine.

EAPN Ireland Roundtable on 2010European Year against Poverty and Social Exclusion on the 8th October 2008 in the Carmelite Centre, Aungier St., Dublin 1 -Cllr. M. Kelly.

Greystones Town Council 2008 Autumn Seminar on 3/5th October 2008 in the Charlesland Golf and Country Club Hotel, Greystones, Co. Wicklow-Cllr. M. Byrne.

Citizen First Conference on 25/26th September 2008 in the Old Ground Hotel, Ennis-Cllr. L. Walsh.

AMAI 95th Annual Conference on 11/13th September 2008 in the Sligo Park, Sligo-Cllr. J. Houlihan(County).

The Blascaod Commemoration 2008, Ionad an Bhlascaoid Mhóir, Dún Chaoin, Co. Chiarraí on 10/12 October 2008-Cllr. J. Crowe.

8. A.O.B.

The Director advised the Members that the preparation of the Regional Planning Guidelines, which was due to commence in Autumn 2008, had been deferred for 12 months due to financial constraints.

Cllr. M. Taylor-Quinn suggested that each Local Authority should provide Planners to assist the Regional Authority in the process, which would help to reduce costs.

This concluded the business of the meeting.