

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Mid West Regional Authority held at 1.30 P.M. on Wednesday 3rd February 2010 in the Council Chamber, Limerick City Council, City Hall, Limerick.

Cllr. L. Walsh, Cathaoirleach presided.

Present:

Clare County Council:

Cllrs. G. Flynn, O. Garry, P. Keane, P.J. Kelly, P. McMahon, B. Meaney and S. Scanlon.

Limerick City Council:

Cllrs. G. Fahy, D. Mc Carthy and S. Scully.

Limerick County Council:

Cllrs. M. Donegan, J. Egan, N. Gleeson, S. Keary, W. O'Donnell and L. Walsh.

North Tipperary County Council:

P. Bugler, G. Darcy, S. Hanafin, V. O'Dowd and M. Ryan.

Apologies: Cllrs. M. Lowry

Absent: Cllrs. R. Butler, M. Hourigan, J. Leddin. K. Leddin

Also Present:

Mr. L. Conneally, Director.

Mr. T. Mackey, Designated Manager.

Mr. S. Treacy, Staff Officer.

At the outset of the meeting Votes of Sympathy were extended to Cllr. J. Egan on the death of his Sister, Cllr. S. Hanafin on the death of his Father and Cllr. J. Leddin on the death of his Father (whose funeral was taking place on the day of the meeting). Cllrs. Egan and Hanafin expressed their appreciation and gratitude for the votes of sympathy and thanked those who had attended the funeral. Prayers were recited for the deceased and the meeting was adjourned for 15 minutes as a mark of respect.

1. Minutes.

The Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on the 6th January 2010 were proposed by Cllr. B. Meaney, seconded by Cllr. W. O'Donnell and agreed as presented.

2. Matters Arising.

Cllr. V. O'Dowd thanked the Department of Transport and other agencies involved in securing the use by the Corporate Jet Sector (General Aviation) of the Custom and Border Protection (CBP) facility at Shannon Airport. She called on the Government to provide the €7M needed to deliver the Lynx Project at Shannon Airport, called on Aer Lingus to use the Shannon CBP facility, and on Shannon Airport Authority to offer incentives to Aer Lingus to use the facility. She welcomed the alliance between Aer Lingus and Aer Arann and urged the Aer

Arann/Aer Lingus partnership to improve transatlantic services from Shannon Airport.

3. Correspondence.

The Members noted the following schedule of correspondence which had been circulated with the agenda:

(A) Letter dated 6th January 2010 from Cobh Town Council re Review of Cobh Town Development Plan, 2005, and preparation of a new Town Development Plan.

(B) Letter dated 23rd December 2009 from Laois County Council re: Review of Laois County Development Plan 2006-2012.

(C) Letter dated 18th January 2010 from Clare County Council regarding Resolution adopted by Clare County Council:

“That Clare County Council strongly objects to the elements of Draft Mid West Regional Authority Guidelines which are contrary to provisions of Clare County Development Plan and which are also hostile to the social and economic well being of the People of Clare”.

(D) Letter dated 22nd January 2010 from Clare Council re: Notice of preparation of Draft Clare County Development Plan 2011-2017.

The Members also noted the following correspondence:

(A) Letter dated 20th January 2010 from the West Regional Authority regarding the review of the West Regional Planning Guidelines.

(B) Letter dated 15th January 2010 from Waterford Energy Bureau regarding Biogas Energy Production in Agriculture.

(C) Acknowledgement from the office of the Minister of Arts, Sport and Tourism addressed to the Cathaoirleach in response to his letter in relation to the Shannon Airport Catchment Fund.

(D) Letter dated 29th January 2010 from Cork County Council re: Cork Airport Special Local Area Plan 2010-Public Consultation Draft.

4. Mid West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP).

The Cathaoirleach then introduced Sean Doherty, Mott McDonald, who made a power point presentation on the Mid West Area Strategic Plan (MWASP) under the following headings:

- Background.
- Study Area.
- Approach Overview.
- MWASP V's RPG's (Differences/Similarities).
- Challenging Issues.
- How do we propose to address the issues?
- Project Programme.
- What is in it for the Mid West Region?
- MWASP (Potential) Outputs.
- Public Transport Feasibility Study (PTFS).
- Summary.

Sean Doherty then answered questions from the Members. Among the issues raised were:

- The level of input from Bus Éireann/Iarnróid Éireann into the MWASP process as some of their services have recently been cancelled/curtailed.
- Legislative basis of MWASP and the need for a Regional Energy Strategy.
- How will MWASP integrate with RPG's/County and City Development Plans
- Need for population targets to be continuously reviewed in light of economic downturn?
- Need for rail link to Shannon Airport.
- Need for indigenous industry to be catered for.
- Plan is for 20 year period-need for regular review.
- Need to protect rail lines and upgrade Limerick/Ballybrophy rail line.
- Need to take private bus services into consideration.
- Need to have proper infrastructure planning in the Mid West region to make the region attractive for investment.

The Cathaoirleach thanked Sean Doherty for his presentation and answering the queries from the Members.

5. Combating antisocial behaviour.

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

6. Waste Management in the Mid West Region.

Cllr. B. Meaney stated Regional Waste Plan areas should be re-aligned to coincide with Regional Authority areas.

The Director stated that some Local Authorities had their own Waste Management Plans under the Waste Management Act 1996. He stated that he would seek clarification from the D.O.E.H. & L.G on the point raised.

7. Deputation to meet Minister for Transport re Aer Lingus and Transatlantic services from Shannon Airport.

The Cathaoirleach pointed out that the Minister's office had requested that the deputation be limited to 4/5.

The Cathaoirleach recommended that the deputation would consist of the Cathaoirleach and Director of the Regional Authority and the 4 Mayors/Cathaoirligh in the region. It was proposed by Cllr. G. Flynn, seconded by Cllr. D. Scully and agreed that the deputation should be as recommended by the Cathaoirleach.

8. Local Authorities emergency responses to adverse weather conditions:

(A) Flooding(B) Frost/Snow.

There was a discussion on the recent severe flooding and frost/snow weather conditions and how the Local Authorities dealt with emergencies arising. Several Members paid tribute to the work undertaken by the Local Authority staff, especially the workers on the ground. However, joint emergency plans need to be prepared by local authorities detailing how in the future these emergencies are dealt with in a co-ordinated manner to ensure that no part of the region is left isolated. The severe damage caused to roads and the cost to Local Authorities of repairs was also raised. It was agreed that the Regional Authority would ascertain the cost to Local Authorities in the region and use the deputation with the Minister for Transport on the 24th February 2010 to seek additional funding to meet these costs.

9. Committee of the Regions (C.O.R).

(A) Irish delegation of the Committee of the Regions.

The Director referred to the letter dated 13th January 2010 from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government regarding the nomination of the Irish delegation of the Committee of the Regions. He informed the meeting that Cllr. Brian Meaney had been nominated by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government as the Mid West Regional Authority representative with effect from the 26th January 2010 for a five year period, in accordance with the Local Government Act, 1991, (Regional Authorities) (Establishment Order) 1993, Amendment Order 1998.

He also informed the meeting that Cllr. Maria Byrne, Limerick City Council, had been nominated as an alternate member of the Committee of the Regions. Cllr. Meaney was congratulated on his nomination and tributes were paid to Cllr. Cathal Crowe for his contribution as the C.O.R. representative for the last four years.

(B) New Mandate-February Plenary Session.

The Director advised the Members of the inaugural plenary session of the Committee of the Regions which will be held on Tuesday/Wednesday 9/10 February 2010 in Brussels.

10. Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's)/Regional Economic Strategy (RES)- Update report.

The Director informed the meeting that Draft RPG's were currently on public display and the closing date for receipt of submissions was 1st March 2010. During January and February 2010 presentations on the Draft RPG's were being made to each of the Local Authorities. The Director's Report on the submissions received will be prepared after the closing date for presentation to the Members for their consideration. The Director stated that each local authority had been invited to make submissions on the Draft Guidelines.

11. Conferences:

(A) Annual Conference 2010.

The Director reminded the Members that Annual Conference will take place on 4th and 5th February 2010 in the Greenhills Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick and sought the support of the Members to insure a good attendance at the conference.

(B) Attendance at Conferences.

The following were nominated to attend the Mid West Regional Authority Annual Conference on the 4th and 5th February 2010 in the Greenhills Hotel, Ennis Road, Limerick: Cllrs. M. Donegan, P.J. Kelly, P. Keane, P. McMahon, S. Scanlon, G. Fahy, L. Walsh and M. Ryan.

12. A.O.B. -None.

This concluded the business of the meeting.