

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of the Mid West Regional Authority held at 1.30 P.M. on Wednesday 5th May 2010 in the Council Chamber, Clare County Council, Ennis.

Cllr. L. Walsh, Cathaoirleach presided.

Present:

Clare County Council:

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

Limerick City Council:

Cllrs. G. Fahy, M. Hourigan, K. Leddin, D. Mc Carthy and D. Scully.

Limerick County Council:

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

North Tipperary County Council:

Cllrs. P. Bugler, G. Darcy, S. Hanafin, M. Lowry and M. Ryan.

Apologies: Cllr. S. Scanlon.

Absent: Cllrs. R. Butler, J. Leddin, V. O'Dowd.

Also Present.

Mr. L. Conneally, Director
Mr. S. Treacy, Staff Officer.
Mr. R. Tobin, RPG Project Manager.
Mr. C. Lynch, Tipperary Institute.

Apology:

Mr. T. Mackey, Designated Manager.

1. Minutes.

The Minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 7th April 2010 were proposed by Cllr. M. Hourigan, seconded by Cllr. G. Fahy and agreed as presented subject to the following amendment, raised by Cllr. B. Meaney, under Item 5- Limerick Local Government Committee: "that the issues raised in the letter from Mr. Eoin Corrigan, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government were not discussed at length but that the discussion was on whether or not the Regional Authority should make a submission".

2. Matters Arising-None.

3. Correspondence.

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

1. Letter dated 19th March 2010 from Kerry County Council re Castleisland Functional Area Plan.
2. Letter dated 12th April 2010 from Listowel Town Council re Listowel Town Council Development Plan 2009-2015.
3. Letter dated 31st March 2010 from the Midlands Regional Authority re: Draft Regional Planning Guidelines.
4. Letter dated 22nd April 2010 from Birr Town Council re: Notice of having adopted Birr Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016.

The Members also noted the following correspondence:

(A) Email dated 28th April 2010 from Mr. Harry O'Connor, European Parliament Office in Dublin requesting the Regional Authority to meet with a delegation of seven M.E.P's. from the European Globalisation Fund (EGF) Working Group on the 4th June 2010.

It was proposed by Cllr. M. Ryan, seconded by Cllr. S. Hannafin and agreed that the Authority should meet with the EGF Working Group. It was also agreed to hold the June monthly meeting on the morning of Friday 4th June 2010 to co-incide with the visit.

(B) Letter dated 27th April 2010 from Brian O'Connell, Chairman, Atlantic Way Trust (AWT) requesting a financial contribution to the organisation.

(5) Combating Antisocial Behaviour-Address by Mr. Dave Sheahan, Chief Superintendant, Henry Street, Limerick.

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr. Dave Sheahan, Chief Superintendant and Inspector Seamus Ruane, Henry Street Limerick to the meeting. He congratulated the Gardai on the successful prosecution in the Roy Collins murder case.

Dave Sheahan made a power point presentation on Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO's).

He outlined the procedures for dealing with ASBO's for children and adults.

He gave ASBO statistics for 2009 and Q1 2010 for Limerick.

He outlined the penalties that can be incurred under the Act. In conclusion he stated that ASBO's can be a very effective tool in combating antisocial behaviour. He referred to the need for greater linkage between the Gardai, Local Authorities and the HSE and the importance of Joint Policing Committees (JPC's) in this regard.

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

- The need for greater Garda visibility in local communities.
- Local Gardai should live within the local community.
- The need to review Bail laws-more crime being committed by suspects while on bail.
- The decline in the use of ASBO's.
- The need for vetting of candidates who avail of Rent Supplement-similar to that for local authority tenants.
- The wearing of "hoodies"-causes difficulty in identification.
- Need for ASBO statistics for Clare/North Tipperary.
- When the use of armed Gardai in Limerick will end.
- The need for control of dangerous dogs.
- The need to tackle antisocial behaviour in the under 12 age group-the need for early intervention by the HSE in tackling this sector.
- The problem of young people congregating and the impact of this particularly for older people.

The Cathaoirleach and the Director thanked Dave Sheahan for his presentation and for answering the questions from the Members.

5. Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG's)/Regional Economic Strategy (RES)-Director's Report in accordance with Section 9(1) of S.I. 100 of 2009 Planning and Development (Regional Planning Guidelines) Regulations 2009.

The Director made a power point presentation on the background to the preparation of the Director's Report, the Groups involved in the process and the number of submissions received. He outlined the common themes of the submissions received and the responses to these. He then outlined the next stage in the process.

The Members noted the Director's Report prepared in accordance with Section 9(1) of S.I. 100 of 2009 of the Planning and Development

(Regional Planning Guidelines) Regulations 2009 copy of which had been circulated with the agenda.

There was a long debate during which various issues were raised by the Members. In particular many Members pointed out that the submissions received from the Local Authorities were from the Executive and had not been adopted by the Members. Some Members while recognising the importance of the Gateway and Hub stressed the importance of ensuring that the rural areas are not neglected. Issues were also raised about some of the language used in the report.

Many Members stated that they wished to discuss the report with the members of their respective local authorities. There was also a discussion on whether the Director's Report or the original Draft Regional Planning Guidelines, circulated with the agenda for the December 2009 monthly meeting showing tracked changes incorporating the Director's report would be the most appropriate document for Members to discuss with the members of the their respective local authorities.

In reply to queries raised the Director stated that in accordance with Section 25(4) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 the making of Regional Planning Guidelines was a matter for the Members of the Regional Authority.

He also stated that in accordance with Section 27(5) of the Act a planning authority may have, but shall not be obliged to have, regard to any regional planning guidelines after 6 years from the making of such guidelines. He stated that the current Regional Planning Guidelines were adopted at the May 2004 monthly meeting of the Authority.

(At 3.30 P.M. it was proposed by Cllr. G. Fahy, seconded by Cllr. B. Meaney and agreed unanimously that Standing Orders be suspended and that the meeting continue to complete the agenda.)

Following further debate it was agreed that a Workshop would be held on Wednesday 2nd June 2010 commencing at 11.00 A. M. when each of the submissions would be examined in detail.

6. Office Accommodation -Mid West Regional Authority.

The Members noted the Director's Report on office accommodation for the Mid West Regional Authority which had been circulated to the Members.

The Director stated that the Finance/Conference sub-committee had requested him to investigate where cost savings might be possible. He outlined the various premises he had examined in Limerick and Nenagh and outlined the cost savings that could be made.

Cllr. S. Hanafin queried the need to move the Mid West Regional Authority headquarters from North Tipperary. He stated that the Authority was already perceived as a Limerick orientated organisation and also that moving the headquarters from North Tipperary could be perceived as if it as an area not being a good place to do business.

Cllr. N. Gleeson queried the implications for staff of moving the headquarters from Nenagh. In reply the Director stated that the current office lease agreement expired at the end of August 2010, the Project Officer was taking a career break from the end of August 2010, the Staff Officer was retiring at the end of June and the Clerical Officer's contract expires at the end of June 2010.

Some Members opposed the move to transfer the headquarters from Nenagh to Limerick while others supported it. Following further debate it was agreed to defer discussion to the June monthly meeting and that the Director would seek to renegotiate the current lease agreement and prepare a report for the next meeting setting out details of the costs of Office Accomodation in Nenagh and Limerick.

7. Rosslare-Waterford-limerick Railway line.

The Members noted the letter dated 26th April 2010 from the South East Regional Authority setting out their opposition to the proposal to close the Rosslare/Waterford rail line.

It was proposed by Cllr. B. Meaney, seconded by Cllr. G. Darcy and agreed that the Mid West Regional Authority would support the South West Regional Authority initiative to oppose the closure and to develop a strategy to develop and promote the Rosslare-Waterford-Limerick rail line.

8. Attendance at Conferences.

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

Dundalk Chamber, BIDS Conference, Ballymascanlon Hotel, Dundalk on the 11th May 2010-Cllr. M.Ryan.

9. A.O.B.

Cllr. M. Hourigan referred to the challenges facing Shannon Airport and stated that the Regional Authority should do everything possible to support the airport.

It was agreed to write to the Ministers and T.D.s in the region to request the Government to remove the €10 travel tax at Shannon Airport.

This concluded the business of the meeting.