



# Freedom of Information Publication Scheme

Southern Regional Assembly  
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O'Connell Street,  
Waterford.  
Tel: 051-860700  
[www.southernassembly.ie](http://www.southernassembly.ie)

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## 1. Background

### Model Publication Scheme

The model publication scheme was approved by Mr Brendan Howlin, TD, Minister for Public Expenditure and Reform under Section 8(7) of the Freedom of Information Act 2014. This scheme does not preclude an FOI body from providing additional information as part of its publication scheme.

## 2. Introduction

Section 8 of the Freedom of Information Act 2014 requires FOI bodies to prepare and publish a scheme concerning the publication of information by the body in conformity with a model publication scheme or guidelines made by the Minister. This allows for the publication or giving of records outside of FOI provided that such publication or giving of access is not prohibited by law. The Minister is of the view that FOI bodies should publish as much information as possible in an open and accessible manner on a routine basis outside of FOI, having regard to the principles of openness, transparency and accountability as set out in Sections 8(5) and 11(3) of the Act. The Minister has made the model scheme which is fully in compliance with Section 8 of the FOI Act for adoption by all FOI bodies. The scheme commits FOI bodies to make information available as part of their normal business activities in accordance with the scheme. Publication of documents which are not exempt under the Scheme is in line with the intention of the Directive on the Re-use of Public Sector Information, and the obligation under that Directive to publish information and ensure that it is accessible and re-usable for commercial and non-commercial purposes.

The Act requires that in preparing, reviewing or revising a publication scheme, an FOI body shall have regard to the public interest in:

- (a) allowing public access to information held by the FOI body;
- (b) the publication of reasons for decisions made by the FOI body; and
- (c) publishing information of relevance or interest to the general public in relation to its activities and functions generally.

## Publication Methods and Review

Under the Publication Scheme, each FOI body shall:

- Set out information to assist members of the public in their understanding of the body and its functions;
- Publish the information it holds grouped under the information headings set out in Section 3 below; and
- Explain the procedures to get access to information or to establish what information the body holds.

There will be circumstances where an FOI body may indicate in its Publication Scheme that a particular item is “not applicable” (“N/A”). These circumstances arise where:

- the body does not hold the type of records concerned;
- the body is only subject to FOI in part and the type of records listed in the scheme are exempt; or
- the information is exempt under one of the FOI Act exemptions or is prohibited by some other statute, licence or regulatory decision.

The publication schemes of FOI bodies should be easily accessible to the public. In addition to publishing the scheme on the FOI body's website, Section 8(6) of the FOI Act provides that each body should maintain a printed version of the scheme at the body's Head Office which should be available for a member of the public to view during normal office hours at 24 hours' notice. It is intended that the basic scheme is all that is required to be kept in a printed version. Information in the scheme which is available by way of a link should be made available for viewing on-line on a case by case basis if required. There will be a limited number of cases where an FOI body comprises a committee, tribunal or Board that do not have ongoing functions. In such cases the FOI body can meet the requirements of the publication scheme by drawing attention to where the information is contained in its Annual Report, or on its website (if any).

An FOI body should publish its publication scheme not later than 6 months after the commencement of Section 8 of the FOI Act 2014 or not later than 6 months after the Minister has, under Section 8(7) of the FOI Act, made or revised guidelines on publication schemes or made or revised model publication schemes such that the publication scheme of the FOI body is no longer in conformity with the Minister's guidelines or model publication scheme.

An FOI body should review and update its publication scheme not later than three years after it is made and every three years thereafter. The material published under the publication scheme should be reviewed and revised/updated where appropriate at least on an annual basis and it is recommended that in the case of procurement or purchase order spends, information should be updated on a quarterly basis. Links should be deleted as they are replaced with more updated information. Information referred to in the Publication Scheme should be stored consistent with the FOI body's records retention policies. There is no requirement to provide information retrospectively, rather current information from the date of publication of the scheme or as otherwise indicated.

The Information Commissioner may, in accordance with Section 8(10) of the FOI Act 2014, examine and report in his annual report on the extent to which, in the opinion of the Commissioner, FOI Bodies are in compliance with Section 8.

### Publication Format

This publication scheme is displayed prominently on the Southern Regional Assembly website with a link to the publication scheme on the homepage.

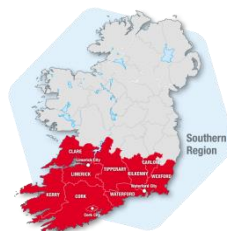
Links to the publication scheme are also be made available in the FOI section of the website and in other related areas.

The model Publication Scheme sets out the minimum level of information that should be provided by an FOI body on its website as part of its publication scheme. Consistency needs to be achieved in terms of the publication of the Information under this scheme, not only in terms of the type of information but also in terms of the format that this information appears on the websites of FOI bodies. On that basis, the model publication scheme requires information to be provided on the websites of all FOI bodies in tabular form under the 6 headings shown as set out below. This will ensure consistency and ease of access for all requesters. Within each tab, there should be a link to the relevant information. Where such information is extensive, or where it is otherwise deemed appropriate, the FOI body should use sub-headings within each tab to make the information more easily accessible. Sub-headings are provided in the model publication scheme. Further guidance to assist FOI bodies to complete the publication scheme is available in Annexe 1 of this document.

### 3. Information about the Southern Assembly (FOI Body)

#### Background to the SRA - Regional Profile & Services Provided

The Southern Regional Assembly (SRA) was established on 1st January 2015 covering all of the counties in Munster plus the south-east counties of Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford.



The SRA is responsible for regional economic and spatial planning, the management of European Regional Development Funding, development, implementation and promotion of regional development policy and activities along with acting as the national contact point for EU-funded transnational programmes. The Assembly coordinates actions to support effectiveness in Local Government and public services.

The SRA emerged from the 2012 Government's *"Putting People First" Action Programme for Effective Local Government* policy paper and the Local Government Reform Act 2014 which set out that the existing two Regional Assemblies and the eight Regional Authorities were to be reconfigured into three new Regional Assemblies.

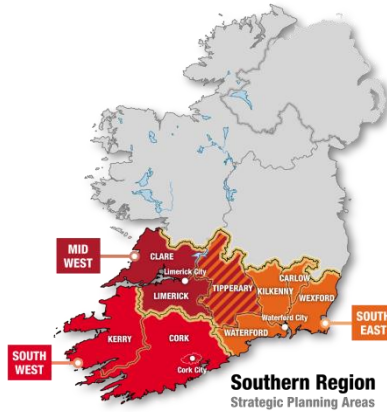
The function of regional planning was transferred from the Regional Authorities to the new Regional Assemblies and this function was expanded to include both spatial planning and economic development and reflects an enhanced role for regional government in Ireland, in addition to the Assembly's continuing role in managing EU programmes on behalf of the Government.

Since 1999, the Southern and Eastern (S&E) Regional Assembly has been involved in the management and monitoring of EU programmes in the S&E Region along with promoting regional policy in Ireland. The Assembly oversaw the €5.4bn Regional Operational Programme 2000-2006 and the €637m programme for the 2007-2013 period. Over the past 15 years the Assembly engaged with Taoisigh, Ministers, and Senior EU Commission Officials to raise issues of concern to the S&E Region, undertaken research and regional initiatives to promote the socio-economic development and investment in the Region.

The European Structural and Investment Funds are concentrated on implementing community policies, and in particular the Europe 2020 Strategy for Smart, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth. The specific focus for the 2007-2013 period has been on innovation and the knowledge economy, environment and renewable energy, urban development and accessibility to services of general interest. The €500m 2014-2020 investment programme co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund, will include strengthening of the regions' research capacity, broadband infrastructure, SME development, energy efficiency measures and an integrated urban development initiative, targeted at the region's gateway cities and hub towns.

#### **Regional Profile**

The Southern Region is comprised of 9 counties, all 6 counties of Munster (Cork City and County, Clare, Kerry, Limerick City and County, Tipperary and Waterford City and County) plus the 3 South-East counties of Carlow, Kilkenny and Wexford. It covers 29,589.8 sq. kms representing 42.4% of the landmass of the Republic of Ireland.



The Region has a total population of 1,424,243, according to the 2011 CSO figures, which accounts for just over 31% of the total population of the Republic of Ireland. The Region’s main urban centres are the Gateway cities of Cork, Limerick-Shannon and Waterford. With an average population density of 48 persons per sq. km it is predominantly a rural region.

% in age category	0 – 14 years	15 – 24 years	25 – 44 years	45 -64 years	65 & over	Total persons in area
<b>South-East</b>	<b>22.1%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>29.6%</b>	<b>23.8%</b>	<b>12.6%</b>	<b>497,578</b>
Carlow	22.2%	12.8%	30.9%	22.6%	11.4%	54,612
Kilkenny	22.2%	11.8%	29.8%	23.9%	12.3%	95,419
Waterford	21.6%	12.3%	29.5%	23.7%	13.0%	113,795
Wexford	22.8%	11.6%	29.4%	23.6%	12.6%	145,320
South Tipperary	21.4%	12.0%	28.8%	24.6%	13.3%	88,432
<b>South-West</b>	<b>20.9%</b>	<b>12.3%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>23.6%</b>	<b>16.3%</b>	<b>664,534</b>
Cork	21.1%	12.6%	31.2%	23.1%	16.8%	519,032
Kerry	20.2%	11.2%	28.6%	25.6%	14.4%	145,502
<b>Mid-West</b>	<b>21.1%</b>	<b>13.2%</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>12.2%</b>	<b>309,005</b>
Limerick	20.4%	14.1%	30.2%	23.1%	12.2%	191,809
Clare	22.3%	11.7%	29.1%	24.6%	12.4%	117,196
North Tipperary	22.0%	11.5%	28.8%	24.3%	13.4%	70,322
SRA	21.3%	12.4%	30.1%	23.7%	14.2%	1,471,117
State	20.5%	14.9%	31.7%	21.9%	11.0%	4,239,848

Further information on the Regional Assembly can be found in the “About Us” Section of our website and in our publications section – Annual Report, Corporate Plan and Annual Work Programme.

## Legislative and Operating Environment

### **Operating Environment:**

In examining our organisational context we acknowledge that we operate in a multidimensional environment. There are a number of factors that dictate how we will implement this plan and realise our core objectives.

#### **1. Local Government Act 2014**

This Act was enacted to make further improved provision in relation to local government and, in particular, to provide for the position of chief executive in relation to each local authority, to dissolve town councils, to make provision for municipal districts, to assign additional reserved functions to local authority members, to dissolve County and City Development Boards and make provision for the establishment of Local Community Development Committees, for planning and oversight of Local and Community Development Programmes, to provide for an increased role for local authorities in economic development and enterprise support, to amend the Local Government Act 1991 and provide for regional assemblies.

#### **2. Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Assemblies) (Establishment) Order 2014**

This Order provides for the establishment of three regional assemblies with a broad range of functions including in relation to assistance from the EU, functions under the Planning and Development Act 2000 (No. 30 of 2000) and in relation to the National Oversight and Audit Commission. The Order provides for the constitution, membership, meeting procedures, administration, finance, staffing and other matters relating to the operation of the new assemblies. It also provides for the dissolution of the Southern and Eastern and Border, Midland and Western Regional Assemblies, established by the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Authorities) (Establishment) Order 1999 (S.I. No. 226 of 1999), and the appointment of the three new regional assemblies as their successors. The Order makes a number of provisions to facilitate the transfer of staff, assets, and liabilities to the successor assemblies as well as addressing other matters related to the dissolution of the regional assemblies.

#### **3. Europe 2020**

Europe 2020 is the European Union's ten-year growth strategy. It involves integrating EU efforts related to development through greater coordination of national and European policies and creating the conditions for a growth model at EU, national and regional levels that is smarter, more sustainable and more inclusive.

Europe 2020 puts forward three mutually reinforcing priorities for the decade:

1. Smart growth: developing an economy based on knowledge and innovation;
2. Sustainable growth: developing a more resource-efficient, greener and more competitive economy
3. Inclusive growth; and Fostering a high-employment economy delivering social and territorial cohesion.

#### **4. EU Cohesion Policy**

Cohesion Policy is the EU's main investment framework and strategy, which targets all regions and cities to support job creation, business competitiveness, economic growth, sustainable development and improve citizen's quality of life. With almost a third of the total EU budget dedicated to Cohesion Policy, it has a key role in meeting the objectives of Europe 2020 to ensure that it is implemented according to territorial cohesion principles. It is delivered across two Goals and through 3 main funds: ERDF, ESF and the cohesion fund.

Goal one - Investment for growth and Jobs - has the overarching aim to make Europe's regions and cities more competitive, fostering growth and creating jobs. It is through this Goal that the Southern & Eastern Regional Operational Programme is funded.

European Territorial Cooperation (ETC), better known as Interreg, is the second goal of Cohesion Policy and provides a framework for the implementation of joint actions and policy exchanges between

national, regional and local actors from different Member States. Co-financed through the European Regional Development Fund, the overarching objective of ETC funding programmes is to promote a harmonious economic, social and territorial development of the Union as a whole. The funding programmes are built around three strands of territorial cooperation and have varying priority areas. The following are relevant to the Southern Region:

Cross-border (A):	Ireland Wales Programme 2014-20 (Interreg VA)
Transnational (B):	North West Europe Programme 2014-20 (Interreg VB)
	Atlantic Area Programme 2014-20 (Interreg VB)
	Northern Periphery & Arctic Programme (Interreg VB)
Interregional (C):	Interreg Europe 2014-20 (Interreg VC)

## 5. Partnership Agreement and Operational Programme

Ireland submitted its Partnership Agreement for the European Structural and Investment Funds to the European Commission in April 2014. The Partnership Agreement sets out arrangements to ensure alignment with the Union strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth; an analysis of disparities, development needs and growth potentials; selected thematic objectives and a summary of the results expected; indicative allocations at national level; arrangements to ensure the effective implementation and co-ordination between of the funds; a summary of the assessment of ex ante conditionalities; and, a summary of the integrated approaches to territorial development. The €500m 2014 – 2020 Southern & Eastern Regional Operational Programme co-financed by the European Regional Development fund, will include strengthening of the regions’ research capacity, broadband infrastructure, SME development, energy efficiency measures and an integrated urban development initiative, targeted at the region’s gateways

## 6. Common Provisions Regulations

REGULATION (EU) No 1303/2013 OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 17 December 2013 is known as the Common Provisions Regulation (CPR) and it lays down common provisions and guidelines on the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the Cohesion Fund, the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development and the European Maritime and Fisheries Fund. The (CPR) establishes the key areas of support, territorial challenges to be addressed, policy objectives, priority areas for cooperation activities and mechanisms for coherence and consistency with the economic policies of Member States and the Union. It also defines the thematic objectives for the Common Strategic Framework Funds that contribute to the EU strategy for smart, sustainable and inclusive growth.

## 7. The National Spatial Strategy (NSS)

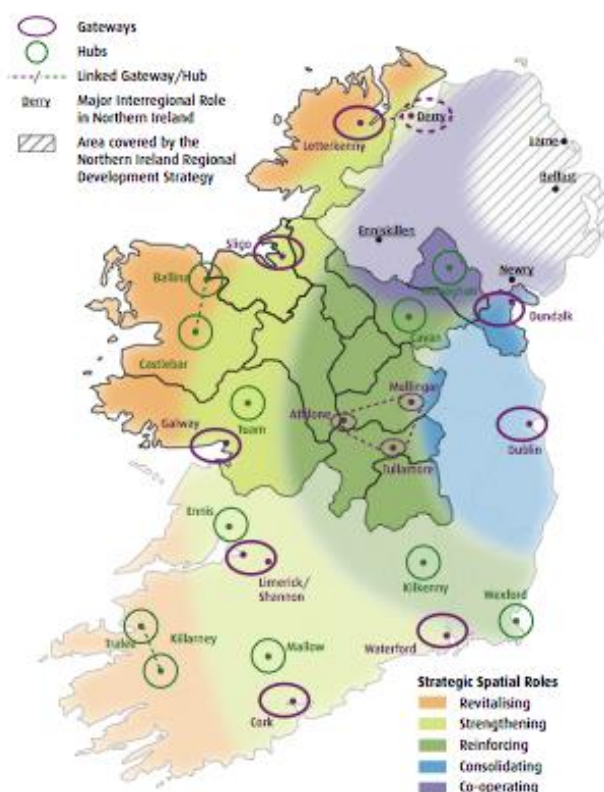
The NSS<sup>1</sup> provides a twenty-year planning framework aimed at achieving a better balance of social, economic and physical development and population growth across the regions. The NSS represents an important territorial development framework and defines a long-term spatial development strategy, to which other national policies should adhere. In particular, the NSS calls for a focussing of investment around a network of nine competitive Gateways, supported by an additional nine Hub towns as well as other large towns in order to drive the development of their wider regions.

There are four designated Gateways in the S&E Region: Dublin, Cork, Limerick-Shannon, and Waterford; and a further six towns in the S&E Region are identified as Hubs - Ennis, Kilkenny, Mallow, Tralee/Killarney, and Wexford.

<sup>1</sup> The Department of Environment and Local Government (2002). National Spatial Strategy for Ireland 2002-2020: People, Places and Potential.



## Map 1: National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020 Gateways & Hubs Map



Source: CSO, *National Income and Expenditure, Annual Results 2011*

### 8. Regional Planning Guidelines

Regional Planning Guidelines (RPGs) are a key implementation mechanism of the Government's overall framework for achieving more balanced regional development and more strategic physical and spatial planning. The principal function for RPGs is to establish a coherent regional planning framework across each region and to link national strategic spatial planning policies to the planning process at City and County Council level by coordinating the Development Plans of local authorities through the Regional Planning Guidelines.

### 9. Planning & Development Acts

The Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended by (*inter-alia*) the Local Government Act 2014, sets out the procedure by which a Regional Assembly shall prepare and make a Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for a whole region or one or more parts of a region.

The Act also sets out the role of the Regional Assembly in making submissions or observations in relation to the preparation by a planning authority of a development plan or variation to a development plan.

### 10. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES's)

The Regional Assemblies will formulate Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, incorporating spatial planning guidelines, in collaboration with the various enterprise/economic development agencies such as Department of Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation, Enterprise Ireland and IDA. The Strategy will align with, or reflect and provide for the implementation of, regional strategic objectives identified by these agencies. The Strategy will also have regard to the policy document *Our Sustainable Future* which outlines a series of measures to support sustainable development and also provides a platform for the development of the green economy that recognises the opportunities for investment and employment

creation in emerging sectors such as renewable energy, energy efficiency and waste and water management.

#### **11. County Development Plans**

Members of City and County Councils are entrusted by law to make a development plan for their administrative area every six years. The development plan provides an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area over its six-year lifespan where development, whether it be residential, industrial, commercial or amenity, must generally take place in accordance with the development plan. The plan provides a vision and the blueprint for the economic and social development of the city or county for which it has been made.

#### **12. Local Economic & Community Plans (LECP's)**

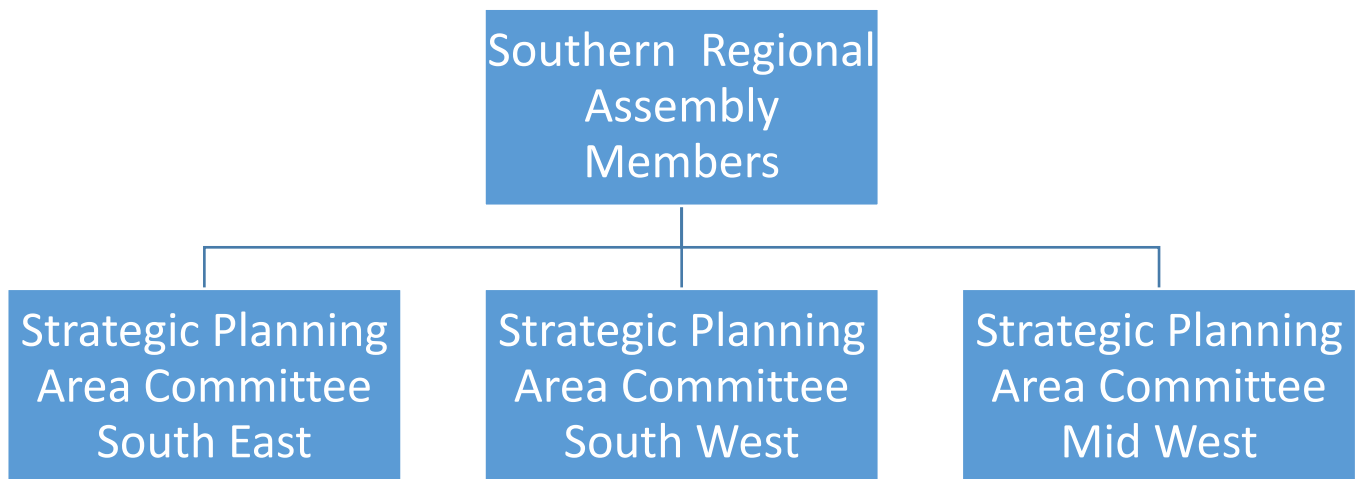
These plans aims to improve the well-being of the people and economy of each county through enhanced strategic planning, better targeting of resources and more meaningful impacts for local communities. The plans will provide the strategic framework for all publicly funded economic, local and community development programmes and for the development of the social, cultural and economic capital of each city/county. The Plan will include measures to tackle poverty and exclusion and to develop opportunities for enterprise and employment, training and education, community wellbeing, rural and community development, local infrastructure and services, tourism, cultural services, innovation/R&D, natural resources and agriculture

## Structure of the Assembly

The Assembly operates through its Elected Members and in relation to overseeing the European Union Structural & Investment Funds, the Monitoring Committee, set up under the EU Structural & Investment Funds Regulations, works in partnership with the staff, to implement policy.

### Governance Structure

Elected Members



### Staffing Structure

**DIRECTOR**

#### E.U. PROGRAMMES DIVISION

Assistant Director

<b>First Level Control Unit</b> Team of Controllers working across all Interreg Programmes incl. Ire-Wales	<b>Operational Programmes Unit</b> Team dealing with all aspects of management of Regional & other Operational Programmes	<b>INTERREG/Projects Unit</b> New team created to support Assembly role in promoting & running EU funded projects
<b>Clerical &amp; Administrative Support</b>		

#### REGIONAL PLANNING & CORPORATE AFFAIRS DIVISION

Assistant Director/Senior Planner

<b>Regional Planning Unit</b> Team of Regional Planning Officers (1 based in each Sub-region (S.P.A.))	<b>Research &amp; Communications</b> Research & Communications Officer plus Economist (on shared service basis with other Reg. Assemblies)	<b>Finance, H.R. &amp; Corporate Affairs</b> Team dealing with Assembly Finances, H.R. & Corporate Affairs (incl. all matters relating to Assembly Members)
<b>Clerical &amp; Administrative Support</b>		

Individual Staff Profiles can be viewed in the "Our Staff" section of our website.

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/our\\_staff](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/our_staff)

## Further information about the Assembly:

Further information on the Southern Regional Assembly and services provided can be found in the following Appendices:

- Legislation
- Meetings, agendas, minutes, etc.
- Corporate Plan Appendix 1
- Annual Report Appendix 2
- Annual Work Programme Appendix 3
- Operational Programme Appendix 4
- Establishment Order Appendix 5
- Local Government Salary Scales (per Grade) Appendix 6
  - o Circular EL 17/2009
  - o Circular EL 05/2013

Links to Other Relevant Documents can be found at: [www.southernassembly.ie](http://www.southernassembly.ie)

**The “About Us” Section of our website contains further information on who we are and what we do:**  
<http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/about>

**Our Assembly Members are shown under their respective Strategic Policy Areas, i.e. South-East, South-West and Mid-West:** <http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/members>

**Our Staff** and their contact details can be seen at: [http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/our\\_staff](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/our_staff)

The various programmes/projects that we are involved in are also detailed on our website:

<http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme>

Link to Regional Programme <http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme>

Link to Ireland Wales Programme <http://irelandwales.ie/>

Link to other programmes/projects

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/priorities\\_and\\_themes](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/priorities_and_themes)

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/atlantic\\_area](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/atlantic_area)

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/partner\\_search](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/partner_search)

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/win2\\_scheme](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/programme/win2_scheme)

## Office Locations – Waterford, Cork and Tipperary

The **Headquarters** of the Southern Regional Assembly is located at:

- Assembly House, O'Connell Street, Waterford, X91 K256

*Link to location map: [http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/location\\_map](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/about/location_map)*

The Assembly also has **sub-offices** at the following locations:

- Regional Planning Office (Mid-West SPA), Civic Offices, Nenagh, Co. Tipperary

*Link to location map:*

*<https://www.google.ie/maps/place/Tipperary+County+Council,+North+Tipperary+Civic+Offices,+Limerick+Rd,+Nenagh,+Co.+Tipperary/@52.862485,-8.20743,14z/>*

- Regional Planning Office (South-West SPA), City Hall, Cork.

*Link to location map: <http://corkcity.ie/aboutus/howtofindus/>*

## 4. Decision Making process for Major Policy Proposals

*From 14<sup>th</sup> April 2016, details will be provided relating to;*

- **How we make decisions on policies and records of decisions**
- **Major policy proposals including any public consultation exercises** and the results of such consultations. Regard will be given to the Consultation Guidelines published and a link will be provided, as appropriate, to information required under those guidelines.
- **Background information relating to major policy proposals and decisions** Reports, papers, facts and analyses provided for consideration which are relevant and important to framing major policy proposals and decisions.
- **Reports on the operation of public services by the Regional Assembly, including Expenditure reviews and Policy assessments, where applicable**

Ireland's Regional Authorities have a range of powers in relation to spatial planning and economic development. - See more at: <http://www.environ.ie/local-government/administration/regional-assemblies/regional-assemblies#sthash.Gn7JsvOY.dpuf>

The following policy areas that Southern Regional Assembly will be involved in are;

1. Prepare and adopt Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSES) nested between the national planning framework (2016-2026) and local city and county development plans. Our economic remit will see greater linkages between spatial planning and the regional action plans for jobs and enterprise (DJEI, 2015). See more at: <http://www.environ.ie/sites/default/files/migrated->

<files/en/Publications/DevelopmentandHousing/Planning/NationalSpatialStrategy/FileDownload%2C852%2Cen.pdf>

2. Ensure that Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP) are consistent with national and regional policy.
3. Ensure that all relevant spatial and economic plans are consistent with regional policy.
4. Participate in the management of Regional Operational Programmes and other Programme Monitoring Committees.
5. Represent local and regional interests in Europe through the Committee of the Regions and the Irish Regions Office.
6. Assist the National Oversight and Audit Committee (NOAC) in the delivery of more effective local government.
7. Carry out monitoring and implementation and assist the National Oversight and Audit Committee. Engage with citizens, across sectors, and at all levels of government and seek out areas of cooperation.
8. Identify opportunities to:
  - enhance social inclusion and well-being.
  - enable growth in employment and enterprise

All major policy decisions are processed through the monthly Assembly meetings.

Records of these decisions are recorded in the Minutes of these meetings and are available here:

<http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/info/minutes>

## 5. Financial Information

In accordance with the Local Government Act 1991 (Regional Assemblies)(Establishment) Order 2014, Section 58(1) A Regional Assembly shall establish and maintain financial systems, accounts, reporting and record keeping procedures, including the preparation of an annual financial statement, which are consistent with such accounting code of practice that the Minister may issue under section 107 of the Act of 2001.

### Annual Budget

Under Section 57(1) A draft budget shall be prepared under the direction of the director following consultation with the chief executive designated under Art. 33(2) in the manner and in the format that may be directed by the Minister, showing the amounts necessary for the performance of its functions;

The Draft Budget for the Regional Assembly is shown in **Appendix 7** of this document and on the website at

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/images/uploads/Approved\\_Budget\\_2016.pdf](http://www.southernassembly.ie/images/uploads/Approved_Budget_2016.pdf)

## Annual Financial Statement

Under Section 58(2), as soon as may be after the end of each financial year, the director shall prepare and submit to the regional assembly and to the chief executive designated under Art.33(2) a financial statement, with a report on it by the director, in respect of that financial year.

The annual financial statement shall be considered at the next practicable meeting of the regional assembly which is held not less than 7 days after the annual financial statement was submitted under paragraph (2).

The Annual Financial Statement of the Regional Assembly is shown in **Appendix 8** of this document and on the website at [http://www.southernassembly.ie/images/uploads/Final\\_signed\\_AFS\\_2015.pdf](http://www.southernassembly.ie/images/uploads/Final_signed_AFS_2015.pdf)

## Local Government Audit

A Regional assembly shall be audited by a local government auditor in accordance with the provisions of section 115(2)(a) of the Act of 2001.

As soon as may be practicable after having been considered under paragraph (3) the annual financial statement shall be transmitted to the Minister and the Director of Audit.

The Director of Audit shall, as soon as may be after the regional assembly receives a copy of an audit opinion, an audited financial statement, an auditor's report or an auditor's special report, send a copy thereof to the Minister, to each member of the regional assembly and to the chief executive designated under Art. 33(2).

The Local Government Auditor's report on the Assembly's Annual Financial Statement is shown at **Appendix 9** of this document and on the website at;

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/images/uploads/LG\\_Auditors\\_Report\\_31.12.15.pdf](http://www.southernassembly.ie/images/uploads/LG_Auditors_Report_31.12.15.pdf)

## Capital Expenditure

The purchase of new premises for the Southern Regional Assembly was approved by the Assembly members and the purchase cost of €360,000 was provided for within the 2015 budget, as approved in September 2014 by members.

The refurbishment works are ongoing, with expected completion date of August 2016.

Purchase Orders for goods and services in excess of €20,000 will be reported on a quarterly basis on the Assembly's website, under Information Centre.

## Member's Allowances and Expenses:

In accordance with Section 59(1) A regional assembly may, in accordance with such directions as may be given by the Minister to the regional assembly, pay to a member of the assembly;

- (a) An annual expenses allowance in respect of expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the performance of his or her functions during the year
- (b) A travel and subsistence allowance in respect of expenses reasonably incurred in the attendance by the member at an event authorised by the assembly
- (c) A training allowance

The members of the assembly may be paid their allowance on a monthly/bi-monthly/quarterly basis.

The total allowance payable to members is adopted as part of the budgetary process and can be seen in **Appendix 7** (Budget).

The total amount paid to members in a financial year is reported on within the AFS and can be seen in **Appendix 8** (AFS)

All details relating to payments to individual members of the Regional Assembly will be available at the following website link: [http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/info/members\\_expenses](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/info/members_expenses)

### Cathaoirleach's Allowance

A regional assembly may, in accordance with such directions as may be given by the Minister to the regional assembly, pay to the Cathaoirleach of the assembly each year an allowance in respect of expenses reasonably incurred by him or her in connection with the performance of his or her functions during that year. The allowance for Cathaoirleach is currently €12,000

### Further information:

*Further Financial Information can be found in the following Appendices:*

- |                                 |             |
|---------------------------------|-------------|
| - Budget                        | Appendix 7  |
| - Annual Financial Statement    | Appendix 8  |
| - Local Government Audit Report | Appendix 9  |
| - Assembly Members Expenses     | Appendix 10 |

## 6. Procurement

As a public body, the Assembly is required to procure goods and services under guidelines issued by the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform,

In line with this directive, tender competitions over €10,000 for ICT and €25,000 for all other competitions are available on [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie)

Public contracts awarded including contract type, contractor, value, award date, duration and brief description, for award of contracts over €10k for ICT and over €25k for other contracts will be published on [www.etenders.gov.ie](http://www.etenders.gov.ie)

## 7. FOI Disclosure Log

Details of non-personal requests under FOI, as set out in the Code of Practice on FOI will be made available on our website under our FOI Section.



## 8. Information Centre:

The Assembly operates in an open and transparent manner and information relating to its day to day activities and functions is available on the website, under the **Information Centre** Section.

Here you will find information relating to our monthly Assembly Meetings, including Agendas and Minutes, along with information relating to Strategic Policy Area Committee Meetings.

[http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/info/annual\\_reports](http://www.southernassembly.ie/en/info/annual_reports)

## 9. Making an FOI Request:

If you are unable to source the information you require routinely from our website, you may apply to obtain the information under the FOI Acts

### How to make an application for information under FOI:

*Please send your request to:*

**Freedom of Information Officer, Southern Regional Assembly, Assembly House, O'Connell Street, Waterford.**

Email: [info@southernassembly.ie](mailto:info@southernassembly.ie) Tel: + 353 (0) 51 860700 | Fax: + 353 (0) 51 879887

### What to include:

In order for a request for information/records to comply with the requirements of the FOI Acts and to enable the request to be dealt with as efficiently as possible:

- Your application should be in writing.
- Your application should also indicate that the information is sought under the Freedom of Information Acts
- You should indicate if information is required in a particular form, e.g. photocopy, computer disk, etc
- You should give as much detail as possible to enable us to identify the record/s. If you have difficulty in identifying the precise records we will be happy to assist you in preparing your request;
- You may be required to prove your identity, especially when requesting personal information you may, therefore, be asked to produce your passport, driving licence or other form of identification
- You should include a daytime telephone number so that you can be contacted if it is necessary to clarify details of your request
- You should pay the prescribed fee by cheque or bank draft made payable to the Ireland Wales Programme

We are obliged to respond to your request within four weeks