



Southern Regional Assembly

12th March 2021, 12:00pm

GoToMeeting

Minutes

Presiding: As both the Cathaoirleach and Leas-Cathaoirleach were delayed in joining the meeting Cllr. Joe Carroll presided until the Cathaoirleach joined.

Present: Cllr. Deirdre O'Brien; Cllr. Robert Beasley; Cllr. Maura Bell; Cllr. Dan Boyle; Cllr. Pip Breen; Cllr. John Brennan; Cllr. Joe Carroll; Cllr. Noel Coonan; Cllr. Séamus Cosáí Fitzgerald; Cllr. Tom Cronin; Cllr. Frankie Daly; Cllr. Deirdre Forde; Cllr. P.J. Kelly; Cllr. Garret Kelleher; Cllr. Kieran McCarthy; Cllr. Andrew McGuinness; Cllr. Ken Murnane; Cllr. Gerard Murphy; Cllr. Michael Murphy; Cllr. Alan O'Callaghan; Cllr. Conor McGuinness; Cllr. Michael O'Meara; Cllr. Michael O'Shea; Cllr. Thomas Phelan; Cllr. Oliver Walsh; Cllr. Gillian Coughlan.

Apologies: None

Officials Present: David Kelly; Kevin Lynch; Derville Brennan; Bryan Riney; Robert Fennelly; Sarah Davoren; Siobhán Rudden; Breda Curran; Rose Power; Karen Coughlan; Marie Harnett; Maria Murphy; Alice Byrne Kelly; Anna Higgins; Catherine Connaughton; Yvonne Cooney.

A record of attendance was taken.

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th February 2021

The Members adopted the minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2021, proposed by Cllr. G. Murphy and seconded by Cllr. O'Shea.

The minutes of the February meeting to be amended to reflect the attendance of Cllr. Ambrose and Cllr C. McGuinness by telephone.

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

3. RSES Implementation

Kevin Lynch presented the RSES Implementation Update Report on the 32 tasks agreed at the January meeting (report circulated).

The Members thanked Kevin for the presentation and a discussion followed with contributions from Cllr. Sheahan, Cllr. Breen, Cllr. Boyle, Cllr. McCarthy, Cllr. O'Shea, Cllr. Phelan and Cllr. Carroll, with points raised regarding including the need :

- to extend public transport',
- competitive funding,
- for improved broadband,

- climate action, and
- for funding from Irish Water for rural village the need to achieve Tier 1 status for Rosslare Europort and improved access to the port.
- Implementation on policies relating to renewable energy and Regional Landscaping Strategy should be prioritised.
- Need for increased capital investment.
- Importance of developing MASP Structures/TUSE.
- Circulation of list of RPOs.

In response David Kelly and Kevin Lynch advised that a key part of the Assemblies work will focus on ensuring that the 50:50 split identified in the NPF in growth between EMRA and the SRA/NWRA is reflected.

4. Blue Green City Project

Bryan Riney presented on the Blue Green City, an Interreg Europe project, which involves interregional learning between EU regions to find common solutions to common challenges of climate change by sharing experience and exchanging good practices to promote green and blue infrastructures as an integral part of infrastructure provision. The presentation outlined the concepts of Blue Green Infrastructure (BGI) and Nature Based Solutions (NBS) and highlighted links between the project and the objectives of the RSES, particularly placemaking for enterprise development. Through the project, the SRA has piloted a regional stakeholder group with Irish Water, Cork City Council, Limerick City and County Council and Waterford City and County Council, OPW, National Biodiversity Data Centre, LAWPRO, and CAROs to work together to define shared challenges and develop a pilot approach to issues experienced by the local authorities. Outputs of the project for the Southern Region include a Regional Action Plan which can be used as a methodology for implementing & mainstreaming BGI and NBS for placemaking in the Southern Region.

The Members thanked Bryan for the presentation and a discussion followed with contributions from Cllr. Sheahan, Cllr. Shanahan, Cllr. Boyle, Cllr. McCarthy, Cllr. O'Shea, and Cllr. Coughlan with points raised regarding:

- Whether this system will become part of the normal planning procedure and if extra costs be need to factored in or will it be subsidised;
- Whether BGI will be mandatory or will it be in the future and whether this would further raise the cost of new houses;
- The need for more Environmental Officers in the local authorities to support these initiatives.;
- The work of the Committee of Regions' Green Deal committee and the many best practice examples of nature-based solutions across the EU, including Utrecht – a Blue Green City as another interesting case study;
- The importance of this issue, particularly among young people;
- Whether the project could have been implemented in other cities and towns in the Region;
- A request to circulate a copy of the presentation to Members.

Bryan Riney advised that the project was piloted in the three cities but that it was intended that the framework and Regional Action Plan will be used by other local authorities as a learning tool. He advised that, while the full BGI will not be mandatory in planning regulations, elements can be mainstreamed and developments in the future as appropriate.

5. Update on Submissions

Kevin Lynch noted two recent submissions following consultation with Members - the draft National Water Resources Plan and the Kilkenny City & County Development Plan.

Cllr. M. Murphy commended the recent submissions by the SRA and the joint submission by the Assemblies on the Recovery Resilience Plan. He stressed the importance of monitoring the Plan, ensuring the submission is taken on board. Cllr. McCarthy asked that Minister McGrath attend an Assembly meeting to discuss the Plan.

David Kelly agreed to explore the possibility of the Minister addressing the Assembly on the RRP with the Minister's office.

6. Nomination to the Association of Irish Regions

Cllr. Phelan was proposed by Cllr. Bell and seconded by Cllr. C. McGuinness.

Cllr. O'Meara was proposed by the Cathaoirleach and seconded by Cllr. McCarthy.

7. Any Other Business

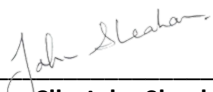
David Kelly welcomed a new staff member Sarah Davoren, EU Executive and National Contact Point for Interreg NWE.

Cllr. Coughlan raised the issues affecting fishing communities in particular the loss of quota by fisherman in her district and asked if the SRA could arrange a meeting with the Irish Fisheries Board and European Fisheries. Cllr. Carroll supported Cllr. Coughlan. David Kelly explained that this is not within the Assembly's functional remit but would revert.

Cllr. McCarthy requested a presentation on the Brexit Adjustment Fund.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Friday 9th April 2021

Signed: 
Cllr. John Sheahan
Cathaoirleach

Date: 09.04.2021



AGENDA

12th March 2021

1. Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 12th February 2021
2. Matters Arising
3. RSES Implementation
4. Blue Green City Project
5. Update on Submissions
6. Nomination to the Association of Irish Regions – two additional Members
7. Any Other Business
8. Date of Next Meeting