

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly held on the
4th September, 2009 in the Chamber of the Border, Midland and Western Regional
Assembly, Ballaghaderreen at 11.30 a.m.**

Present:

Cllr. Owen Bannigan	Cllr. Larry Bannon	Cllr. Andrew Boylan
Cllr. Aidan Boyle	Cllr. Terry Brennan	Cllr. Cyril Burke
Cllr. Martin Connaughton	Cllr. Pdraig Conneely	Cllr. Gerard Corcoran
Cllr. Tom Crosby	Cllr. James Daly	Cllr. Tiernan Walsh
Cllr. James Deegan	Cllr. Eamon Dooley	Cllr. Peter Feeney
Cllr. Gerry Finnerty	Cllr. Joe Flanagan	Cllr. Marie Therese Gallagher
Cllr. Connie Hanniffy	Cllr. Imelda Henry	Cllr. Eugene Lavin
Cllr. Charlie McConalogue	Cllr. Dara Mulvey	Cllr. Damien Ryan
Cllr. Peter Savage	Cllr. Terence Slowey	

Apologies Cllr. Frank Dolan Cllr. Michael J. Crowe

Officials: Mr. Kieran Moylan, BMW Regional Assembly
Mr. Barry Guckian, BMW Regional Assembly
Mr. Michael O'Brien, BMW Regional Assembly
Ms. Gerardine Lafferty, BMW Regional Assembly
Ms. Catherine Burke, BMW Regional Assembly
Ms. Pauline Grennan, A/Assistant Staff Officer

1. Adoption of Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly held on 24th July, 2009

PROPOSED by Cllr. James Deegan

SECONDED by Cllr. Connie Hanniffy

RESOLVED

“That the minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Border, Midland and Western Regional Assembly held on the 24th July, 2009 be **ADOPTED**.”

2. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising

3. Presentation by Dr. Brendan Flynn, Department of Political Science & Sociology, NUI Galway on the Lisbon Treaty Referendum

Dr. Brendan Flynn, Department of Political Science & Sociology, NUI Galway gave a presentation on the Second Lisbon Treaty Referendum. Dr Flynn's presentation focused on the Irish Guarantees and the Agriculture/Fisheries Sector.

The following are some of the key points:

- The Irish guarantees include the following:
 - Ireland and all Member States will be guaranteed a Commissioner;
 - No Legal Interference on Abortion, Family or Education;
 - No new Competences on Tax;
 - No Interference with Irish Military Neutrality, No EU Army and No Conscription;
 - There is also a Solemn Declaration on Workers' Rights and Social Policy;
 - There is a National Declaration by Ireland about Neutrality;

- These Guarantees are Legally Binding;
- The Political Significance of these Guarantees;
- Details of issues less discussed the last time round; and
- How CAP and CFP will evolve after Lisbon with this greater EP input.

Cllr. Boylan thanked Dr. Flynn for his presentation and the following issues were discussed by the members:

- The Lisbon Treaty and the Charter of Fundamental Rights;
- Specific Guarantees under the Lisbon Treaty and how it affects Ireland;
- Legal status of the Guarantees;
- Lisbon Treaty Campaign and the availability of simplified documentation;
- The benefits of Ireland's Membership of the European Union;
- The importance of the Agriculture and Fisheries Sector in Ireland;
- Guarantee of an EU Commissioner for Ireland and every Member State;
- Protection of Workers Rights and Rights to Privacy;
- The Importance of Irish Neutrality;

Members discussed the issue of transposing EU Directives into Irish Law and suggested that clarification should be sought in relation to the Irish implementation of EU Regulations.

Dr. Flynn responded to a number of the issues raised:

- The Lisbon Treaty streamlines the EU's decision-making procedures and amends and updates earlier EU Treaties;
- The Treaty recognises the rights and principles set out in the Charter of Fundamental Rights and makes the Charter legally binding;
- The powers of the European Parliament will be increased, giving MEPs more of a say on a wider range of issues;
- The Commission will continue to be formed of one Commissioner from every Member State;
- Nothing in the Treaty of Lisbon changes the competences of any Member State with respect to taxation;
- There is a clear reference that the Lisbon Treaty does not affect or prejudice Ireland's Policy of Military Neutrality;
- There is a solemn Declaration on Workers' Rights and Social Policy;
- National Parliaments in each Member State will be given a greater role in examining EU Laws before they are passed.

4. Consideration of the Regional Implications of the Report of the Special Group on Public Service Numbers and Expenditure Programmes (McCarthy Report)

Mr. Kieran Moylan, BMW Regional Assembly, gave a presentation on the Regional Implications of the Mc Carthy Report and summarised the key findings of the Report.

The presentation included the following:

- Terms of Reference of the Special Group;
- Expenditure Savings and Staffing Reductions;
- Rationalisation of Research and Innovation Funding;
- Rationalisation of Enterprise Support Agencies;
- Community & Employment Support Services Recommendations;

- Department Level Proposals; and
- BMW Regional Operational Programme Implications.

Following the presentation the members discussed the following issues:

- Cost of running the Public Sector and Local Government Reform;
- Impact of the McCarthy Report recommendations on the BMW Regional OP;
- The importance of the County Enterprise Boards to regional communities;
- The effect of the proposed cuts under Research and Innovation;
- Proposed rationalisation of energy efficiency schemes;
- Recommendations in the Agriculture Sector and the impact on small farmers in relation to the proposed closure of REPS 4 to new applicants and cuts in the Disadvantaged Area payments;
- Cuts under the Rural Transport Scheme and the Social Impact on Rural Communities;
- High costs associated with the Metropolitan Area Networks (MANs) Programme and the need for a review of the programme in this regard;
- The security aspect of Garda Stations in Rural Areas;
- The importance of the Tourism Sector to Ireland's economy; and
- The lack of thought given to the proposed cuts in the Education Sector and the impact of the increase in pupil/teacher ratio.

5. Launch of the BMW Regional Assembly 10th Anniversary Annual Report 2008

Mr. Kieran Moylan informed the meeting that the BMW Regional Assembly's special edition 10th Anniversary Annual Report had now been completed. We are currently awaiting a response from the Taoiseach Mr. Brian Cowen T.D. who has been invited to launch the Report.

6. Correspondence

There was no correspondence

7. Any Other Business

There was no other business

The foregoing minutes are confirmed.

Cathaoirleach

Director

Date