

Alderman Hussey nominated as Chairperson	PROPOSED: Councillor Reilly	SECONDED: Councillor Heaney
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As there were no further nominations, Alderman Hussey was elected as Chair of the North West Regional Development Group.

Councillor Brogan welcomed Alderman Hussey to the position of Chair and wished him well in his new position.

3. Election of Vice Chair

Alderman Hussey sought proposals for the position of Vice Chair for the incoming year.

Councillor McMonagle nominated as Vice Chair	PROPOSED: Councillor Brogan	SECONDED: Councillor Canning
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As there were no further nominations, Councillor McMonagle was elected as Vice-Chair of the North West Regional Development Group.

Alderman Hussey and Councillor McMonagle thanked members for the nominations and also thanked Councillor Brogan for his tenure as Chair over the previous 12 months.

Councillor Brogan thanked Members, Chief Executives and the Secretariat for their assistance, and support during his tenure as Chair.

4. Minutes & Matters arising from the meeting of 7th July 2022.

The draft minutes of the 7th July were:

APPROVED: Minutes of the meeting of the 7th July 2022 were approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

PROPOSED: Councillor Brogan
SECONDED: Councillor Doherty

Matters arising

Councillor Crossan advised that he was in attendance at the previous meeting, however was absent from the attendance list. Minutes of the previous meeting to be amended to show same.

5. Correspondence from 7th July 2022 meeting

Councillor Heaney asked if a response had been received regarding a delegation travelling to Dublin regarding CODA.

The Strategic Business Manager advised that the correspondence discussed at the previous meeting had been duly issued. She advised that the correspondence had been acknowledged but no official response had been received by the Secretariat. Councillor Boyle suggested that the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat engage with the Aviation Minister to reiterate the issues discussed.

AGREED: Minister for Aviation to be engaged in relation to the CODA PSO to Dublin.

PROPOSED: Councillor Boyle
SECONDED: Councillor Heaney

6. Presentation – Colm McColgan, ERNACT

Alderman Hussey welcomed Mr Colm McColgan and Ms Margaret Quinn from ERNACT, who delivered a detailed presentation on the North West City Region Digital Strategy. Mr McColgan thanked members for the opportunity to attend the meeting and gave a brief overview of the organisation and how it is progressing.

Mr McColgan outlined that the UK's exit from the EU will affect how the organisation is funded as ERNACT is established as a European Economic Interest Group. He advised this needs to change in the long-term and is actively looking for a solution with Government. He asked members for political support to assist in overcoming this legal issue in the coming months.

Ms Quinn gave details of ERNACT's work developing the digital strategy for the NW City Region covering many sectors, such as marine, public services, tourism, energy and manufacturing.

She advised that a website has been established (northwestcityregion.com), which aims to drive cross border digital transformation.

Members thanked Mr McColgan and Ms Quinn for presenting and for the huge amount of positive work that has been carried out over the years with a dedicated team. Members also voiced their support for ERNACT and the positive cross border work underway.

Councillor Boyle asked what the Councils could do regarding the legal issue. Mr McColgan explained that when the UK decided to leave the EU, ERNACT were left without legal recourse and require national political support to find solutions. He added ERNACT is an exemplar of what can be done on a cross border basis to help bring funding solutions.

Councillor Heaney said members could take this issue back to their own parties and write to the Taoiseach in support of ERNACT and the work that they do.

The Chair thanked Mr McColgan and Ms Quinn for the fantastic projects presented and their success.

Agreed: To write to the Taoiseach in support of ERNACT and their work.

PROPOSED: Councillor Heaney
SECONDED: Councillor Boyle

7. NW Partnership Strategic Governance Issues

(a) Shared Island applications update

Mr McLaughlin said 5 applications were submitted by Donegal County Council, three of which were linked to Derry and Strabane and two with Fermanagh and Omagh. He advised that the launch event was due to take place in Cavan on Thursday 29th September whereby the Taoiseach shall make the announcements on the successful applications.

Mr McLaughlin said the three applications in conjunction with DCSDC looked favourable, one linked with decarbonisation, one with the Colmcille walkway and third the Regulatory Technology project. He thanked Mr Martin for the work in coordinating the project applications and said that an update would be provided to the next meeting on what the applications entailed and what the next steps are.

Mr Kelpie said that five applications were submitted by DCSDC, one with Galway on culture i and one with Cork on learning cities.

The Chair thanked the Chief Executives for their input.

Councillor McMonagle suggested the outgoing Chair attend the launch event on behalf of the Group. Councillor Brogan agreed he would attend.

Agreed that Councillor Brogan would attend the SIU funding announcement on 29th September in Cavan.

(b) NW16/22 Update on Statement of Regional Priorities

The Strategic Business Manager updated members on a range of thematic discussions hosted by the Joint Secretariat of North South Ministerial Council (NSMC) to progress elements within the statement of regional priorities. She advised that the first of seven thematic discussions took place on Friday 16th September at NSMC in Armagh with Government officials, Chief Executives, Department of Industry, Trade and Employment, Department for the Economy and the NI Executive Office, Economic Development teams and digital attendance from the joint Chambers of Commerce. The meeting was facilitated by ICLRD.

Councillor Doherty thanked the Strategic Business Manager for the report and commented that the seven themes proposed align with the three pillars of economic growth, environmental development and social cohesion. He asked if there were implications, consequences or benefits for the partnership in engaging with the workshops and if there would be access to further financial assistance.

Mr McLaughlin said the thematic workshops demonstrate that the councils are actively working together to address the issues which are hindering growth. He added that the region is currently lagging behind other regions in terms of innovation and growth and there is a need to collaborate with central government to deliver actions to address this. Mr Kelpie added that the ambition is to make the region achieve its potential and in order to achieve this both governments should increase strategic collaboration on a cross border basis in key areas. He said the workshops need to provide 3-4 practical things that Government departments will collaborate on.

In response to Councillor Canning's query in relation to the A5 Working Group, the Chief Executives outlined that both Councils have membership on the A5 working group and the NWRDG supports the group's objectives in also championing progress on the A5/N2. The Director of Environment and Regeneration added that one of DCSDC members attended the last meeting and reiterated council's support for the scheme and alignment of messaging.

(c) NW17/22 Post Project Evaluation (PPE) – Terms of Reference

The Strategic Business Manager updated members on the Post Project Evaluation process initiated by The Executive Office on the North West Development Fund. She added that the terms of reference was co-designed with Council Chief Executives, who suggested that the PPE should include the full €5m fund, that the consultant should have an understanding and experience in cross border collaboration and funding regimes and that Irish Government officials should be consulted and engaged in undertaking the evaluation. She outlined that The Executive Office would shortly be procuring and consultant to undertake this work and that the work would be complete over the winter months. Members noted the update.

(d) NW18/22 Financial Monitoring Report and Register of Decisions

The Senior Project Officer sought approval of the Financial Monitoring Report and Register of Decisions as at September 2022. The Senior Project Officer informed members that approximately £4.3m had been committed for the first phase of the NWDF, with actual expenditure of £3.69m. She added that the total fund from The Executive and the Irish Government has now been fully committed.

Members adopted the Financial Monitoring Report and Register of Decisions to September 2023.

PROPOSED: Councillor Canning
SECONDED: Councillor McMonagle

(e) NW19/22 NWSGP Support Costs – for approval

The Strategic Business Manager sought Members approval for the continued ICLRD support and facilitation of the North West Strategic Growth Partnership. Costs of £26,216 for the period 1st September 2022 until 31st March 2023 were approved.

AGREED: £26,216 for continued ICLRD facilitation of the NWSGP from 01st September to 31 March 2023.

PROPOSED: Councillor Boyle
SECONDED: Councillor Brogan

8. Economic Growth and Investment

(a) NW20/22 Joint Proposal from Chambers of Commerce

The Director of Economic Development, Information Systems and Emergency Services sought approval for the development and delivery of the NW Future of Energy Conference and Exhibition by Londonderry Chamber of Commerce and Letterkenny Chamber of Commerce.

Approved: Members approved £16,000 from the NWDF for the NW Future of Energy Conference & Exhibition.

Proposed: Councillor Brogan
Seconded: Councillor Canning

9. Physical and Environmental Development

(a) NW21/22 Regional Energy Agency

The Director of Services, Water & Environment, Donegal County Council and the Director of Environment and Regeneration, DCSDC presented a report seeking Members approval for continued expenditure from the NWDF for costs associated with the development of the governance structures within Donegal County Council and Derry City and Strabane District Council to establish a Regional Energy Agency.

Approved: Members approved £90,000 from the NWDF, for the continued development of the Governance structures within DCC and DCSDC to establish a Regional Energy Agency.

Proposed: Councillor Brogan

Seconded: Councillor Canning

10. A.O.B.

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 13th December at 10.00am at Atlantic Technological University (formally LYIT).

Thanking Members and presenters for their participation and engagement, the Chairperson declared the meeting closed at 3.50pm.