

*Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly*  
*Tionól Reigiúnach Oirthir agus Lár-Tíre*

**MINUTES for MEETING**

**OF THE EASTERN AND MIDLAND  
REGIONAL ASSEMBLY**

**HELD ON**

**Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> February 2026**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF EASTERN AND MIDLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON THE 13<sup>TH</sup> OF FEBRUARY 2026.**

<b>Cllr Mike Bray</b>	<b>Cllr Deirdre Heney</b>
<b>Cllr Danny Byrne</b>	<b>Cllr Feljin Jose</b>
<b>Cllr Mick Cahill</b>	<b>Cllr Rachel Kerley</b>
<b>Cllr Fiona Connolly</b>	<b>Cllr Dermot Lacey</b>
<b>Cllr Avril Cronin</b>	<b>Cllr Aoibheann Mahon</b>
<b>Cllr JP Durkan</b>	<b>Cllr Pádraig Mc Evoy</b>
<b>Cllr Caroline Dwane Stanley</b>	<b>Cllr Garry Murtagh</b>
<b>Cllr Neil Feighery</b>	<b>Cllr Sean O'Brien</b>
<b>Cllr Catherine Fitzgerald</b>	<b>Cllr Oisín O'Connor</b>
<b>Cllr Eddie Fitzpatrick</b>	<b>Cllr Gerry O'Neill</b>
<b>Cllr Joe Fox</b>	<b>Cllr Aengus O'Rourke</b>
<b>Cllr David Gilroy</b>	<b>Cllr Robert Power</b>
<b>Cllr Patsy Glennon</b>	<b>Cllr Paul Ross</b>
<b>Cllr David Healy</b>	<b>Cllr Joanna Tuffy</b>

**Apologies received: Cllr Kieran Dennison**

**In Attendance:**

**Mr. Kieran Kehoe, CE Meath CoCo**

**Ms. Clare Bannon, EMRA**

**Ms. Anne-Marie Wood Wolfe, EMRA**

**Mr. Bernard Kenealy, EMRA**

**Ms. Bernie Roe, EMRA**

**Ms. Teresa O Reilly, EMRA**

**Ms. Laure Antoniotti, EMRA**

**Dr. Owen Douglas, EMRA**

**Ms. Geraldine Kenny, EMRA**

**Mr. Ross Higgins, EMRA**

**Visitors:**

**Ms. Sinéad Dooley (EIRGRID Head of Public Engagement)**

**Mr. Jason Kenna (EIRGRID Head of Network Projects)**

**Ms. Jennifer Boyle (EIRGRID Senior Planner).**

## **ITEM 1**

### **Adoption of Minutes of meeting held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2026**

Minutes of the meeting of the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly held on the 16<sup>th</sup> of January 2026 were proposed by Cllr P Mc Evoy and seconded by Cllr D Lacey.

The minutes were **APPROVED**.

## **ITEM 2**

### **Programme of Works 2026 – Adoption of Annual POW 2026**

Ms C. Bannon provided an update to the members on the Annual Programme of Works 2026. She noted that this is the first Programme prepared under the Assembly's new Corporate Plan 2025–2030, which places a strong emphasis on regional development, European engagement and cooperation, and strengthening governance and organisational capacity across EMRA's three strategic pillars. Ms C Bannon indicated that key work areas for the year will include:

- Work to support the Irish Presidency of the European Union in the second half of 2026, including an event on 1 July in Brussels, coordinated by IREO.
- The review of the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) which will begin in March 2026.
- Delivery of the EU JTF including the launch of a new action START.
- Work with the OECD on a report aimed at strengthening Ireland's Regions towards a stronger multi-level governance system for improved performance.

This was **NOTED**.

## **ITEM 3**

### **Presentation by Eirgrid on Future Grid Infrastructure for the Region**

Ms S. Dooley (Head of Public Engagement, EirGrid) and Mr J. Kenna (Head of Network Projects, EirGrid) delivered a presentation on future electricity grid infrastructure requirements for the Region. The presentation outlined the need for grid reinforcement, the plan-led approach to infrastructure delivery, proposed projects within the EMRA area, and EirGrid's approach to public and community engagement.

A discussion followed with contributions from Cllr. O O'Connor, Cllr M Cahill, Cllr R Power, Cllr O Brien, Cllr D Lacey, Cllr P McEvoy, Cllr JP Durkan, Cllr M Bray, Cllr D Gilroy, Cllr J Fox, Cllr D Heney, Cllr P Ross, Cllr G Murtagh, Cllr D Healy, Ms S Dooley, and Mr J Kenna.

#### **ITEM 4**

##### **Presentation of START- A new action under the EU JTF.**

Ms B. Roe delivered a presentation on the new START (Supporting Transition and Resilience Together) action under the EU Just Transition Fund (EU JTF). The presentation outlined the EU JTF programme's implementation phases, progress to date, the introduction of the new Priority 4 START, budget and indicative timelines, and the supports available to beneficiaries.

The Cathaoirleach, Cllr D Healy requested the Leas-Chathaoirleach, Cllr P Glennon, to formally take over chairing the meeting as he had to attend another appointment.

This was **AGREED**.

A discussion followed with contributions from Cllr. G Murtagh, Cllr P McEvoy, Cllr P Ross, Cllr J Tuffy, Ms B Roe, and Ms C Bannon.

The presentation was **NOTED**.

#### **ITEM5**

##### **Correspondence**

None

#### **ITEM 6 – Any Other Business**

Ms C Bannon gave the members details on the following items:

- i. Submission of the Regional Assembly (Planning and Economic Development Section)

It was outlined to Members that the purpose of this document is to provide clarity to elected members on when the Regional Assembly will make submissions to various plans, programmes, and statutory processes. It outlines the circumstances in which the Assembly will engage in consultations and make formal observations, ensuring transparency and consistency in how the Assembly contributes to regional, national, and local policy development.

- ii. RSES Issues Paper

The RSES Issues Paper will be considered at the March Assembly meeting. The Draft Issues Paper will issue to members on 2<sup>nd</sup> of March, with comments requested by 9<sup>th</sup> of March to allow for discussion at the March meeting.

- iii. NOAC/ CCMA Annual Good Practice in Local Government event

The Cathaoirleach has been invited to attend the NOAC/CCMA Annual Good Practice in Local Government event, which will take place on 10 March in Kilkenny Castle.

- iv. Revised European Charter on the Participation of young people in local and regional life.

A request was received from Mr. Jerome Joseph, Permanent Representation of Ireland to the Council of Europe, seeking observations on the revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life. The material will be circulated to members, and although EMRA will not be making a submission, any comments received will be forwarded on their behalf ahead of the deadline.

#### ITEM 7

##### Date of next meeting

The next meeting of the Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly is due to be held on **13<sup>th</sup> of March 2026** at 11:00am.

Signed:



Cllr David Healy  
Cathaoirleach EMRA



Ms. Clare Bannon  
EMRA

Date:

13-3-2026

