

From: Councillor Mary Roche <cllrmaryroche@waterfordcouncil.ie>
Sent: 09 November 2017 09:28
To: National Planning Framework
Subject: NPS Strategy Submission

To whom it may concern;

This is my (brief) response to the recently published Draft National Planning Strategy Ireland 2040 Our Plan.

The plan is strong on many points including that it offers a strong diagnosis of the South East Regions problems. Missing is a solution. The only concrete action is North Quays - which is good, but on its own will not be enough to transform the region. The M34 has been left on the backburner - an element of national infrastructure that will ultimately need to be addressed and should be included.

Very significant earmarks for the other cities (Limerick, Cork and Dublin in particular) are included - so the plan has specific plans for cities that are in good shape, and no plan for the city-region (Waterford and the South East) in deepest trouble. A mental calculation suggests that the South East is on track for about €100m, while the other cities are closer to the €500m+ (no costings are offered with the plan). Given that it is to run to 2040 the national plan appears to accept and perpetuate the relative underinvestment and consequential economic, societal and cultural poverty of a significant part of Ireland in the South East region. I would respectfully suggest that this needs to be addressed in the final plan.

I also have grave fears that the Southern super-region would mean a concentration of resources to the largest city (Cork) while starving the other cities in that region. Tied to the previously noted lack of proposals for Waterford this does not pose the strongest option for Waterford City. This also needs addressing in my view.

I also wish to re-iterate that there is no plan for better regional economic accountability. Although the plan is to be put on a 'statutory footing' I am not sure what that actually means in practice. A regional structure which is homogenous across all departments with standardised indicators would be a means of measuring the actual delivery of this policy and without it I am fearful that things will continue as before with no change embedded at departmental level and continued underinvestment in Waterford and the South East in comparison to other cities and regions as has been demonstrated by the yearly South East Economic Monitor which I submitted as part of the original consultation process.

I wish to see equity amongst the regions and more solutions offered for Waterford and the South East as there are for other city regions and a guarantee that all departments and government agencies would commit to fairer distribution of national resources.

Thank you.

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