

PRESS RELEASE!!!!!!!!!!

To all Editors:

Narrow Water Bridge Approval – Forty years in the making!

The Chairman of East Border Region, Cllr Jackie Crowe, has announced his delight that the Narrow Water Bridge project has been approved by the INTERREG IVA Steering Committee today. (Wednesday 24th October). The Bridge which will be the first major infrastructure link between Ireland North and South has been awarded €17.4 million of European funding from the Cross Border INTERREG IVA Programme.

This major capital investment will see the development of a 195 metre single carriageway cable-stayed bridge across Carlingford Lough linking Counties Down and Louth and will be an opening bridge to enable tall ships, leisure craft and other marine vessels access to Victoria Lock and the Albert Basin in Newry. The total length of the scheme is 620m while the towers have a height of 90m and 37m respectively. In 2008 Louth County Council engaged Roughan O'Donovan Consulting Engineers to design a bridge in keeping with the outstanding natural beauty in the area. The same company designed the Boyne Bridge on the M1 near Drogheda.

Now that funding has been secured work on the development of the Bridge will begin immediately and will be completed by June 2015. East Border Region Ltd is lead partner in the project and will be responsible for financial management and adherence to INTERREG regulations whilst Louth County Council as Lead Council will be responsible for building the Bridge and Newry and Mourne District Council as project partner will be integral in the delivery of the overall project.

East Border Region is a local authority led grouping comprising ten councils, 7 in N Ireland and 3 in the Republic of Ireland. The organisation was formed in 1976 by Newry and Mourne District Council, Louth County Council and Monaghan County Council with the aim of promoting cross border economic development which has mutual benefit for the people of the region. The Narrow Water Bridge project was first mooted at a meeting of East Border Region in 1976 and has been promoted by the organisation since that time (see attached Press Article Newry Reporter 1976). Mr A Lockhart Chairman of Newry and Mourne District Council in 1976 stated the following at a meeting of EBR “Although it might not be an opportune time to talk about building the bridge I feel that when the troubles die down it would provide great opportunities for industry and tourism”.

Cllr Jackie Crowe Chairman of EBR welcomed today's funding announcement “The Narrow Water Bridge is a genuinely symbolic cross border project providing the first bridge linking Ireland and Northern Ireland and will provide a momentous tourism and economic catalyst for the whole of the region. The Bridge development will provide much needed jobs in the construction sector in the short term and will undoubtedly enhance the tourism potential of the region as it acts as a gateway to the Mourne and Cooley Mountains”.

Cllr Crowe ended by paying tribute to all those past and present elected members of East Border Region who have worked tirelessly to promote the Narrow Water Bridge project. Today's funding announcement is testament to their hard work, dedication and resilience.



“The Special EU Programmes Body (SEUPB) can confirm that approximately €17.4 worth of funding, from the European Union’s INTERREG IVA Programme, has been approved by its Independent Steering Committee for the Narrow Water Bridge project. However, given the high value of funding sought, project approval is also dependent upon the financial support provided by the relevant accountable departments, which include the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport in Ireland”.

ENDS

Press Contact:

Ms Pamela Arthurs/ Ms Sharon Digby
Development Office
East Border Region
Unit 2, Monaghan Court
Monaghan Street
Newry
BT35 6BH

Tel: 028 3025 2684 /048 3025 2684

Mobile: 07811328260

Fax: 028 3025 2685 /048 3025 2685

Email: pamela@eastborderregion.com/ sharon@eastborderregion.com

URL: www.eastborderregion.com

Notes to Editor:

About SEUPB / INTERREG IVA:

- The Special EU Programmes Body is a North/South Implementation Body sponsored by the Department of Finance and Personnel in Northern Ireland and the Department of Finance in Ireland. It is responsible for managing two EU Structural Funds Programmes PEACE III and INTERREG IV designed to enhance cross border co-operation, promote reconciliation and create a more peaceful and prosperous society. The Programmes operate within clearly defined areas including Northern Ireland, the Border Region of Ireland and Western Scotland.
- The INTERREG IVA 2007-2013 Programme is worth €256 million and aims to address the economic and social problems which result from the existence of borders. It has two distinct priority measures to create co-operation for a more prosperous and sustainable cross border region.
- For more information on the SEUPB please visit www.seupb.eu

About EBR:

- East Border Region Ltd (EBR) is a Local Authority led organisation which comprises ten Local Authorities namely; Newry and Mourne, Down and Banbridge District Councils, Armagh City and District Council, Craigavon, Ards and North Down Borough Councils in Northern Ireland and Louth, Monaghan and Meath County Councils in the Republic Of Ireland.
- EBR was established in 1976 to promote innovative, cross border economic development in the areas of agriculture, Industry, Commerce and Tourism and to improve the living conditions and employment prospects of those living in the region. EBR was awarded the role of Implementing Body in the Ireland/Northern Ireland INTERREG IIIA Programme 2000-2006 and as a result successfully implemented approximately €25 million to genuine cross border projects across the region. At present EBR has been successful in securing approximately €15 million from the INTERREG IVA Programme. EBR is a truly democratic, representative, transparent, multi skilled cross border organisation.
- For more information on EBR please visit www.eastborderregion.com