

**Minutes of Proceedings of Special Meeting of
Nenagh Town Council held in the Civic Offices, Nenagh
on Wednesday, 22nd August, 2007**

Councillors Present: Cllr. S. Morris Cllr. T. Moylan
 Cllr. S. Farrell Cllr. V. O'Dowd
 Cllr. T. Mulqueen

Also Present: P. Heffernan, Town Manager
 D. Purcell, A/Town Clerk
 S. O'Callaghan

Apologies: Cllr. H. McGrath Cllr. T. Morgan
 Cllr. J. O'Connor Cllr. T. Sheary

The Mayor, Cllr. S. Farrell presided.

1. To discuss decision by Aer Lingus to withdraw their flights between Shannon and London Heathrow from January 2008.

The Mayor made the following statement: -

"I would like to seek unanimous support from my colleagues on this Town Council to be fully behind the west in the fight to defend the Shannon-Heathrow slots. The airline was privatised in the context of a commitment by Government that holding a 25% stake would protect so called "key strategic interests".

As members of Nenagh Town Council we are now demanding the retention of the existing Shannon-Heathrow services, and we are calling on the Government to use its considerable stakeholding in the company to ensure that Shannon Airport retain its existing Heathrow slots.

This move by Aer Lingus of its Heathrow slots from Shannon also highlights the potential of similar actions by Aer Lingus on its Heathrow routes from Cork and Dublin and therefore this issue is not just a regional issue but indeed a national one.

The Government has to decide whether or not it takes regional development seriously and realise that the loss of the vital air link in the region will have devastating consequences for the mid-west and western regions.

This local authority key aim is to promote the social and economic development of the town. There is a considerable business presence in Nenagh that services the Limerick-Shannon area and if these areas are going to directly suffer from the loss of the Heathrow services, these businesses in Nenagh will also be affected. Furthermore, there are a number of Nenagh people employed in Limerick-Shannon

and they must be extremely concerned that this move could affect their livelihood down the line. It is important that we quantify the impact this decision could have on the town and I call on the local Chamber of Commerce to produce some analysis that would back up the retention campaign that is gaining momentum.

Minister Hctor and Deputy Lowry must use their position as supporters of the Government to get this decision changed. Failure to do so will be detrimental to Nenagh.”

Her fellow Members agreed wholeheartedly with the sentiments expressed in the statement.

The Town Manager fully supported the proposal to take serious issue with the decision of Aer Lingus to suspend the flights from Shannon to Heathrow. He felt that it did not have to be an “either or” decision between Shannon and Belfast and that there was the wherewithal to have both concurrently. He supported the proposal to have the decision rescinded and the flights maintained. He stated that the County Manager, on behalf of all the Authorities in North Tipperary, had made a similar statement at a public meeting in Shannon.

It was unanimously agreed that the following motion be sent to the Minister for Transport: -

“As members of Nenagh Town Council, we are now demanding the retention of the existing Shannon-Heathrow services, and we are calling on the Government to use its considerable stakeholding in Aer Lingus to ensure that Shannon Airport retain its existing Heathrow slots.”

It was unanimously agreed that the following motion be sent to Aer Lingus: -

“As members of Nenagh Town Council, we are now demanding the retention of the existing Shannon-Heathrow services, and we are calling on Aer Lingus to ensure that Shannon Airport retain its existing Heathrow slots.”

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Mayor: _____

Town Clerk: _____

Date: _____