

**Tom Parlon, Director General, CIF**

**First off, thanks to all those who presented today. The quality of speaker was brilliant from a technical point of view.**

**But it was also excellent to see speakers with such evident passion for their region and a belief in their role in positively improving the region.**

**The CIF president said that he wanted this to be the first step in the everyone in the region coming together to make a compelling case for more delivery of the projects committed to in the NPF.**

**It's evident now, with Dunkettle and the delay in most infrastructure projects of importance, that the region will need to fight for promised investment.**

**There too many financial, external and political pressures on agents of state to hope commitments will be met.**

**It's also evident that the region's best chance to secure this essential investment is to have stakeholders across the region, the CIF, Local authorities, city council, Ministers, politicians etc to demand investment.**

**All the investments/project in the NPF across this region should be banded together as essential to the establishment of the Atlantic Economic Corridor to counter balance Dublin. If each city and town goes to Government individually, it will be too easy to divide and conquer. Professor Crowley's presentation on regional economic progress shows that Dublin's scale naturally attracts more support and yields more jobs than people! (It's a bit like Dublin football – all the advantages of a huge population. But Kerry showed that with some guile, agility and clever use of resources, giants can be ...almost slain.) So it can be done with collaboration.**

**As President Lucey said, the CIF will work to bring this coalition together over the coming weeks. We will help drive the collaboration required to get movement again and force political action.**

**The clear message from today is that the region is central to the future of Ireland's economic and social progress. There is much going for the region, and much to be celebrated. The south has every chance to become the exemplar of sustainable and sensible development, upwards in the city, around the Port and across the region, if the people in this room collaborate.**

**So thanks to all speakers and of course you, the attendees who have given their time and money.**

**Special thanks to our regional director Conor and his team Ronan and Brid. There is no greater advocate for this region than Conor, I can tell you that from sitting in many meetings with him. Congratulations on a great event and all the coverage it has achieved for the region.**

**Thanks to the Lord Mayor for attending, our President Pat Lucey and our Cork Branch Chairman Aidan Mangan who is a new chair but already a great advocate for the CIF and the region.**

**Thank you.**