

**Minutes of Meeting of Community, Culture and Library Services Strategic Policy Committee held on 16th October, 2020 at 10.00 am in Thurles Municipal District Chamber**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** Micheál Lowry (Chairman), Fiona Bonfield, Ger Darcy, Niall Dennehy, Andy Moloney, Anne Marie Ryan

**Sectoral Interests:**

**In Attendance:** Karl Cashen, Director of Services  
Damien Dullaghan, County Librarian  
Julia Walsh Drohan, Museum Service  
Eddie Meegan, AO, Community and Economic Development  
Roisin O'Grady, Heritage Officer  
Melanie Scott, Arts Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr Siobhan Ambrose, Cllr Micheál Anglim, Cllr John Crosse, John Butler, Eamon Clancy, Peggy O'Brien, Matt O'Meara, Patrick Hanley, Evelyn Noonan

Councillor Micheál Lowry, Chairman, opened the Meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

**Item 1: Minutes from previous meeting, 12th March, 2020**

Proposed: Cllr. Ger Darcy

Seconded: Cllr. Niall Dennehy

**Item 2: Mid-term review of the Library Development plan by Damien Dullaghan:**

Damien Dullaghan presented a mid-term review of the Tipperary County Council Library Development Plan, *Inspire, Share, Connect*. The policy was adopted by Tipperary County Council in October 2017. He outlined the goals which have been achieved to date and gave progress reports on outstanding items.

Cllr Andy Moloney enquired about the progress made on the proposed new library at the Craft Granary, Cahir. Damien Dullaghan outlined how a design team had been appointed and that a part 8 planning application was due to be submitted by the end of the fourth quarter of 2020.

Cllr John Fitzgerald and Cllr Niall Dennehy requested an update on the progress made regarding a new library for Clonmel. In addition, Cllr Fitzgerald asked what would happen regarding the provision of a library service in the town once works commenced.

Damien Dullaghan explained that the project had been given stage one approval and is currently waiting for stage two to be approved. He also outlined how the proposal calls for a new library to be built on the current site. Once this stage has been achieved, Tipperary County Council would seek a temporary site to house the library until the works are completed.

Cllr Ger Darcy complimented the staff of Borrisokane Library. He further stated that the library service in the town was very well used. He expressed concern at the size of the library building in Borrisokane and stated that the town would benefit from a larger space. Damien Dullaghan stated that he had noted Cllr Darcy's concerns about the building and that he would explore options regarding the building.

### **Item 3: Community Monument Scheme & Heritage Council Community Grants Scheme**

Róisín O'Grady spoke about funding opportunities. She informed the meeting that there were two additional funding streams announced for the heritage sector from the July Stimulus fund.

The first is the reinstated Heritage Council Community Grants Scheme. It has been absent for the last two years due to resource issues and was regarded as a big loss to community groups who used it as seed funding to get local heritage projects off the ground. This reinstated funding will allow people and groups to take steps to conserve or raise awareness of their local heritage. The turnaround time was very tight in terms of applications and delivery of projects and there were groups who were disappointed as the scheme was hugely oversubscribed. This meant that not everyone who applied were successful in getting funding.

The second is a long anticipated investment in our archaeological heritage through the Community Monument Scheme. There are 3 strands to this fund,

1. Capital
2. Conservation Management
3. Interpretation.

This scheme was open to private landowners and the Local authority and applications were made through the Local Authority. The scheme also funded 100% of costs. Tipperary County Council were successful in all categories and received funding for:

1. Conservation Works for Pallas Dorrha Church
2. Conservation Plan for Carney Castle Ardcroney
3. Reconstruction drawing of Emly Monastic Site

Róisín O'Grady confirmed that the scheme will run in 2021.

She stated that the scheme was very important and it was a positive development. There were six potential applications.

She also presented a brief overview of the Heritage Council Community Grant Scheme. She stated that the timeline for this grant scheme will be a challenge as there were 313 applications with 68 grants on offer.

Cllr Niall Dennehy enquired about the proposed new development at Kickham Barracks. He stated that there is a war memorial onsite which would need to be protected. In addition, Cllr Dennehy asked about a Borough Boundary Plate, on the perimeter wall of the former Meat Factory at Abbey Road and whether this could be protected also. Róisín O'Grady stated that she had noted both of these queries and would look into the matter and revert back to Cllr Dennehy on this.

Cllr Annemarie Ryan stated there were successful applicants in Tipperary town and she welcomed this funding. However, there were other applicants who were not successful. Cllr Ryan queried if there was any options for them. Róisín O'Grady stated that the assessment was challenging given the volume of applications. However, she further stated that these applicants can reapply for funding in 2021.

Cllr Ger Darcy welcomed the funding announcement for Pallas Church. He acknowledged that the timeframe for getting the grant money spent was very tight but stated that he was confident that it would be achieved. He also welcomed the news that Carney Castle would also be receiving funding.

#### **Item 4: Museum Update**

Julia Walsh Drohan gave an outline of the Museum's events programme. The Museum reopened in July. There was a great deal of planning involved as some of the Museum's exhibits can be physically handled. Control measures have now been put in place to prevent the risk of Covid 19 transmission. Museum staff have been working on a War of Independence exhibition for several months. It had been planned to launch it in late November but it was not clear if this could now happen. The Museum has been exploring alternative options including an online exhibition instead. The 8th annual Museum lecture series commenced in October. This year's theme is the War of Independence. The first lecture was delivered online. Viewers watched this from the United States, United Kingdom and several counties in Ireland and Museum Staff viewed this as a very positive development.

The Museum has been working on a project to convert rare Mick Delahunty recordings on vinyl records to CD. There had been great national interest in this project and some of the recordings have been played for the first time on Radio 1.

#### **Item 5: Any Other Business:**

Melanie Scott gave an update on the Festival Strategy which was due to be end in 2020. She stated that the pandemic had made it very difficult to run festivals and events. Because of this, she asked the SPC members to consider extending the Festival Strategy for one year up to the end of 2021. This would allow the Arts Office to support festivals and events throughout 2021 through the existing Festival and Events Scheme. During 2021, the Arts Office would carry out an internal review of the strategy. As part of this review, the Arts Office would consult with the sector to develop a new strategy from 2022. It was decided to adopt this change. Cllr Andy Moloney proposed this and it was seconded by Cllr. Ger Darcy.

Cllr Niall Dennehy asked the Arts Officer about correspondence which he had received from the Clonmel Entertainment and Arts Initiative regarding the difficulties facing the sector during the pandemic. Melanie Scott stated that she had received this also, and had organised a meeting between the group and the Culture Team to discuss how support could be given to the group.

Cllr. John Fitzgerald commended the Arts sector on the innovative ways they were delivering events online.

Cllr Micheál Lowry commended the Council Team for the innovative ways they have worked throughout the current crisis. He stated that the Council had been nimble and adaptable and that he had received very positive feedback about this.

**Date/Time of next meeting:**

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> December at 10:00am.

Venue: Thurles MD Chamber

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

**Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Councillor Micheál Lowry,  
Chairperson.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2020