

Minutes of Meeting of Community, Culture and Library Services Strategic Policy Committee held on 26th March, 2021 at 11.00 am via Zoom

Present:

Councillors: Cllr Micheál Lowry (Chairman), Cllr Micheál Anglim, Cllr Fiona Bonfield, Cllr Ger Darcy, Cllr Niall Dennehy, Cllr Andy Moloney, Cllr Anne Marie Ryan, Cllr Siobhan Ambrose, Cllr John Fitzgerald,

Sectoral Interests: John Butler

In Attendance: Brian Beck, a/Director of Services
Damien Dullaghan, County Librarian
Marie McMahon, Museum Service
Eddie Meegan, AO, Community and Economic Development
Roisin O'Grady, Heritage Officer
Melanie Scott, Arts Officer

Apologies: Eamon Clancy, Cllr John Crosse, Peggy O'Brien, Matt O'Meara, Evelyn Noonan, Patrick Hanley

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

Item 1: Minutes from previous meeting, 4th December, 2020

Proposed: Cllr. Niall Dennehy
Seconded: Cllr Anne Marie Ryan

Item 2: Update on Royal Sites Tentative List application:

Róisín O'Grady presented an overview of the process whereby applicants can apply to get onto the tentative list for World Heritage status. She stated that there were 1,121 World Heritage sites in total with 529 in Europe and North America and 3 of these are in Ireland. She then outlined the details of the current Royal Sites which Tipperary County Council is part of. There are 6 Royal Sites which in Ireland which are a unique collective prehistoric sites associated with ancient sites of royal inauguration in Ireland. The Rock of Cashel is one of the 6 sites. The next steps in the process are to compile and submit a joint application for the Royal Sites by the end of June. It had been decided that a website would be setup to engage and inform all stakeholders and communities throughout the process. Preliminary consultation will commence in the coming weeks through a survey which will be put on this website. There was broad support for the application amongst the SPC members. Cllr Ryan

queried when the website would be ready and Róisín O'Grady confirmed that it would be going live in early May. Cllr Ambrose conveyed her congratulations for the work to date and stated that this project could be game changer for Cashel.

Brian Beck stated that the support of the SPC members was appreciated and that this presentation could be made to the full council in either April or May. He further stated that Tipperary was leading on the project and there was a real opportunity to grow visitor numbers not just in Cashel but all towns in the County.

Item 3: Update on Library and Museum re-opening

Damien Dullaghan gave an update on the national position regarding Library opening. He outlined the background relating to Libraries over the past 12 months. The Library Service initially closed in March 2020 and re-opened in June 2020. Libraries reverted back to a "contact and collect" service in October 2020 and reopened in December 2020. However, the Government's decision to revert to Level 5 restrictions at the end of December 2020 meant that Libraries had closed again from January 2021. Damien Dullaghan then outlined how Tipperary Libraries had made a concerted effort to offer online services including storytime, arts and crafts and lectures using their online social media platforms. He then outlined the Library reopening strategy. It was anticipated that Libraries would commence a "contact and collect" service in May 2021 and would offer a gradual return to services in line with the Government's plan to ease restrictions. There would be a marketing campaign to highlight this re-opening and the Library Service would put time and resources into this campaign. Health and Safety measures would be both visible and reassuring and that the Library Service would return to normal in the future. Cllr Moloney enquired if there was a confirmed timeline for Library re-opening. Damien Dullaghan confirmed that there was not at this moment but it was envisaged that this would tie in with the Taoiseach's announcement in early May.

Marie McMahon gave an update on the Museum's re-opening plan. She outlined how the Museum's offering had improved greatly with the investment made to refurbish and re-imagine the Museum. She gave an overview of the Museum's seven themes which underpin the collection. She stated that a key goal was to engage with stakeholders and potential visitors to ensure that the Museum had a successful re-opening. She stated that the Museum had commenced an advertising campaign across the credit unions in Co. Tipperary and she showed the members samples of the screen advertising which was being used for this campaign. She finished the presentation by outlined the health and safety measures which have been implemented to ensure the safety of visitors.

Item 4: Update from the Arts Office by Melanie Scott

Melanie Scott gave an update on the actions being taken by the Arts. As part of the Keep Well Initiative and with a specific focus on the "switching off" element, the Cultural Team curated a range of resources and programmes to support local wellbeing between January and March 2021. Through an open call to creative practitioners, cultural organisations,

artists and heritage specialists in Tipperary, 10 online programmes were supported. These projects included music projects with Men's Sheds; Circus workshops for teenagers and young adults; afarming and gardening series with Cloncannon Biofarm; a month long online programme of creativity & wellness with The South Tipperary Arts Centre; The Sofa Symphony - Listening Party with musician Eamon O'Malley; instructional gardening workshops with Tipperary County Libraries & Ruth Farrell Horticulturist; a video on making nest boxes with Birdwatch Tipperary and online Music appreciation projects for over 60's with musician Suzanne Buttimer, and the making of a Virtual Radio Drama with Tudor Artisan Hub in Carrick on Suir, there was something for all interests.

Melanie Scott also outlined a new initiative to develop digital skills for Creative Practitioners in Co. Tipperary. The new programme began on 4th February and will run until 22nd April. During this time the artist trainer will deliver a programme based on identified needs.

Melanie Scott gave a brief overview of the upcoming Bealtaine Festival. She stated that the Arts Office were planning for an online event for 2021 during May in partnership with Tipperary Library Service.

Item 5: Update from C&E by Eddie Meegan

Eddie Meegan gave an overview on actions being taken by the C&E Section. He stated that the current RDP/LEADER programme is closing out and Tipperary LAG has delivered almost €8 million worth of projects over the time frame of the current programme. On the LCDC funding schemes, he stated that Clar 2021 has been announced and is open until 7th of April for expressions of interest. Also the community gardens & allotments 10% match funding and level of funding will be €5000-€50,000. There is a new innovation measure advertised also but expressions of interest need to go directly to the DRCD. With regard to the Healthy Ireland scheme, there is a Community Grants Scheme for local community and voluntary organisations who can apply for grants between €2,000 and €5,000 to help support community mental health initiatives. The actions include themes on Mental Health, Physical Activity, Sexual Health, Nutrition and Community Engagement is ongoing and funding in place until December 2021.

Tipperary Age Friendly partnered with FRC and Community Groups in 10 Pilot locations across the county in the provision of digital devices and supports to address digital poverty and support the older adult in becoming confident and competent in the use of technology. This action was supported by Tipperary PPN, South Tipperary Development Company and North Tipperary Development Company for the initial pilot location purchase of the digital devices. In addition, over the coming months a schedule of content related to the older people will be developed with regular opportunities for engagement.

Date/Time of next meeting:

Friday 11th June - time to be confirmed.

Venue: Online

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

Signed: _____

**Councillor Micheál Lowry,
Chairperson.**

Date: _____, 2021