

**Minutes of Meeting of Community, Culture and Library Services Strategic Policy Committee held on 4th December, 2020 at 10.00 am in Thurles Municipal District Chamber**

**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,

**Sectoral Interests:** Patrick Hanley,

**In Attendance:** Karl Cashen, 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:** Cllr Siobhan Ambrose, John Butler, Eamon Clancy, Cllr John Crosse, Cllr John Fitzgerald, Peggy O'Brien, Matt O'Meara, Evelyn Noonan

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

**Item 1: Minutes from previous meeting, 16th October, 2020**

Proposed: Cllr. Ger Darcy  
Seconded: Cllr. Niall Dennehy

**Item 2: Overview of Community Section by Eddie Meegan:**

Eddie Meegan presented an overview of the work of the Community Development Section of Tipperary County. This included an overview of The Local Economic and Community Plan which is in its final year. An Annual work plan relating to the LECP for 2020 was reviewed twice in 2020 in July and in December. He also gave an update on the Current LEADER Programme which is due to end in December 2020, SICAP, CLÁR, the Community Enhancement Programme, Healthy Ireland, Jigsaw and Age Friendly Ireland. Cllr Andy Moloney enquired about the potential funding streams for 2021. Eddie Meegan replied that it was hoped most of the programmes would have similar funding to 2020 but that some programme themes might change.

**Item 3: Update on national policy regarding Library Opening by Damien Dullaghan**

Damien Dullaghan gave an update on the national position regarding Library opening. He outlined how the position on the Government's position on Library opening in the *COVID-19 Resilience and Recovery Plan* had been revised. Up to October 2020, Public Libraries could offer a "Click and Collect" service under Level 3. However, Libraries would close under both Level 4 and Level 5 scenarios. This position has now been revised. Libraries can open to the public in Level 3. The click and collect service can now be offered under Level 4. Libraries must still remain closed under Level 5. Damien Dullaghan also outlined the measures which have been put in place to ensure the safety of Library users in a Level 1 - 3 scenario. Cllr Anne Marie Shiner stated that the services offered by the Library Service were very important. She welcomed the changes made relating to Library opening under Level 3.

**Item 4: Report in review of the Arts Act Grant Scheme by Melanie Scott**

Melanie Scott gave a brief overview of the Arts Act Grant Scheme. This scheme, which is a reserved function allows for a local authority to provide financial assistance for the purposes of stimulating public interest in the arts, promoting knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts, or improving standards in the arts. She outlined how there were two schemes which were in place up to the formation of Tipperary County Council. Following the amalgamation of the North and South County Councils in 2014, the Arts Office revised its Arts Act Grants funding scheme to develop a whole-county approach. It was agreed to run a holding scheme during 2015 and 2016 trying to bring guidelines from former differing schemes together into one and move applicants towards a new way of working. Melanie Scott then requested that the Internal Auditor review the scheme in light of the merging of the two previous grants programmes. This review sought to analyse the effectiveness of the Arts Acts Grants scheme and to assess the levels and types of support available to arts organisations across the county. A new Arts Act Grant procedure and scheme were developed towards the end of 2016/early 2017 and recommendations from the 2015 audit were incorporated to ensure a streamlining of the procedures and processes. Over the period 2016 to 2020, 68 organisations and groups have received funding totalling €167,095 under this scheme. A further 10 festivals received €12,000 under the scheme in 2016. In 2017, these festivals (and their associated budgets) were transferred to the Council's Festivals and Events scheme. The flexibility of the scheme is evidenced by the fact that 32 of the 68 received funding for one-off artistic events, while the remainder seek support for annual activities.

An external review of the scheme was carried out in 2020 as per the recommendation of the Internal Audit review, 2015. It has found that the scheme is meeting its stated targets to assist groups and organisations in stimulating public interest in the arts, promoting the knowledge, appreciation and practice of the arts and in improving standards in the arts in the county. The scheme acknowledges and supports the effort and activity of voluntary and not-for profit groups and organisations in Tipperary. Events supported under this scheme

deliver quality arts experiences to participants and audiences, and offer opportunities for participation and engagement in the arts for groups and individuals across the county. Scheme running well meeting stated targets The audit made a series of recommendations which will be implemented.

#### **Item 5: Update from Heritage Officer**

Róisín O'Grady gave an overview of the progress made by the Heritage Office in 2020. Grant draw downs have taken place for the following funding programmes: The County Heritage Plan Funds, National Biodiversity Action Plan, Community Monuments Scheme, Decade of Commemorations programme fund and the Creative Ireland Programme.

All of these funding streams have been confirmed for the implementation of next year's Heritage Programme. Róisín O'Grady welcomed the news that the National Heritage Plan will be launched early in New Year. This is much anticipated and as Tipperary County Council moves into the final year of its own Heritage Plan, it will be very helpful to have the national framework in place to work with.

Tipperary County Council's Biodiversity Action Plan programme benefitted from a 2 year stream of funding which will be continuing into 2021.

The Community Monuments Fund will run next year and the overall funding has been increased to €1.5 million nationally. The Heritage Office is currently assessing potential projects. Róisín O'Grady stated that it is a very well structured stream catering for all elements of projects from conservation plans to capital works and including interpretation. It is 100% fund and it is a great opportunity . It is open to private landowners with recorded monuments on their land and local authorities for monuments in public spaces.

The Heritage Office are expecting an increase in Decade of Commemorations funds for next year so Tipperary County Council's community grant scheme will go ahead. The final instalment of Tipperary Studies and Dr Des Marnane's publication and exhibition on 'A history in documents' dealing with the Civil War will be published in 2021. The Heritage Office are also looking at securing the services of a 'Historian in Residence' for the county.

Creative Ireland is facilitated through the Heritage Office but overseen by the Cultural Team including Libraries, Museum and Arts Office. It is a broad based interdisciplinary programme that has created cultural engagement programmes right across the county since its inception. The two schemes will open in January and close in February to dovetail with the Festival and Events scheme run by the Arts Office.

Finally, Róisín O'Grady acknowledged the tremendous work of all our community groups and creative communities who delivered projects in a very difficult year in 2020.

**Item 5: Update from Museum Curator**

Marie McMahon outlined how the museum began its research of Tipperary's War of Independence in January 2020 and have since been working with a designer and production team to create a high quality War of Independence exhibition. Museum staff have teamed up with photography colourists and the National Library to showcase colourised images of the War of Independence up to signing of the Treaty in 1921. The exhibition will be launched in 2021.

The Museum was invited to display The Bloody Sunday (Hogan Jersey) on the Late Late Show in late November as part of the Bloody Sunday commemoration. The Museum received very positive publicity through photographs of Ryan Tubridy with the Jersey in local and national press.

The Museum celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary this year with the launch of 'Rediscovery of Mick Delahunty's Lost Recordings'. Marie McMahon outline how the Museum remastered, digitised and successfully marketed the '*Lost Recordings of Mick Delahunty 1948*' CD, to national acclaim. These recordings had not been heard for over 72 years. Museum staff sent out over 700 copies to cocooning families and individuals and there has been a great response to this initiative.

Cllr Andy Moloney commended Museum staff for the display of the Hogan Jersey on the Late Late Show. He stated that the Hogan Jersey was very significant and it was great to see such positive publicity.

**Date/Time of next meeting:**

Friday 26th March - time to be confirmed.

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

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

**Councillor Micheál Lowry,  
Chairperson.**

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