

# **Minutes of Meeting of Community, Culture and Library Services Strategic Policy Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, 2023 in Thurles MD Offices and via Zoom**

## **Present:**

**Councillors:** Cllr Andy Moloney (Chairperson), Cllr Niall Dennehy, Cllr Anne Marie Ryan, Cllr Siobhan Ambrose, Cllr John Crosse, Cllr Fiona Bonfield,

**In Attendance:** Brian Beck, a/Director of Services  
Damien Dullaghan, County Librarian  
Marie McMahon, Museum Curator  
Melanie Scott, Arts Officer  
Róisín O'Grady, Heritage Officer  
Fiona Crotty, AO, Community and Economic Development  
Marie Cox, AO, Community and Economic Development

**Apologies:** Cllr Micheál Anglim, Cllr Ger Darcy, Cllr John Fitzgerald, Cllr Micheál Lowry, Eamon Clancy, Matt O'Meara, Patrick Hanley, John Butler, Michelle Lawrence

Councillor Moloney opened the Meeting and welcomed those in attendance.

## **Item 1: Minutes from previous meeting, 3<sup>rd</sup> March, 2023**

Proposed: Cllr Niall Dennehy

Seconded: Cllr Siobhan Ambrose

**Matters arising:** None

## **Item 2: Update on Local Development Strategy by Fiona Crotty & Marie Cox**

Fiona Crotty, Community Section gave a presentation on the Local Development Strategy for County Tipperary. She outlined the Specific Objectives of CAP 2023-2027.

These are

1. Fair Income - support viable farm income and the resilience of the agricultural sector.
2. Competitiveness - enhance market orientation and increase farm competitiveness.
3. Food Chain - improve the position of farmers in the food value chain.

4. Climate Change Action - contribute to climate change mitigation and adaptation.
5. Environmental Care - foster sustainable development and efficient management of natural resources such as water, soil and air.
6. Landscapes and Biodiversity - contribute to halting and reversing biodiversity loss, enhance ecosystem services and preserve habitats and landscapes.
7. Generational Renewal - attract and sustain young farmers and new farmers and facilitate sustainable business development in rural areas.
8. Vibrant Rural Areas - promote employment, growth, gender equality, including the participation of women in farming, social inclusion and local development in rural areas, including the circular bio-economy and sustainable forestry.
9. Food and Health - improve the response of EU agriculture to societal demands on food.

Fiona Crotty then gave some background information on the LEADER programme from 2014-2022. It was the first all-county basis for delivery of LEADER in County Tipperary. Tipperary Local Community Development Committee submitted an Expression of Interest to be the Local Action Group (LAG) for LEADER with two implementing partners North Tipperary LEADER Partnership (NTLP) and South Tipperary Development Company (STDC). Tipperary County Council were the Lead Financial Partner on behalf of the Leader Action Group. Fiona Crotty stated that funding of over €12m was received from 2014-2022. This was broken down into six headings:

- Economic Development, Enterprise Development and Job Creation - €5.2m
- Social Inclusion - €3m
- Rural Environment - €1.2m
- Food projects - €880K
- Co-operation projects: €1.14m
- EURI Projects: €689K

Fiona Crotty then gave an overview of some of the funded projects which took place throughout the county which included playgrounds, retrofit projects and upgrade works.

Fiona Crotty gave a brief overview of the LEADER 2023-2027 programme. She stated that the funding was lower and would be €7.8m. She stated that there would be no National Food or Co-operation project budgets in this round of funding. She further stated that the overarching policy context for this new period would be as follows:

- Our Rural Future 2021-2025
- Sustainable Development Goals
- Climate Change Mitigation
- EU Charter of Fundamental Rights
- Smart Villages Concept
- EU Long Term Vision for Rural Areas
- Local Economic and Community Plans (LECP)

Marie Cox, Community Section, then gave an update on the LECP. She stated that the purpose of the LECP is to set out, for a six-year period (2023-2028), the objectives and actions needed to promote and support economic development and the local and

community development in Tipperary, both by itself directly and in partnership with other economic and community development stakeholders. She further stated that in areas where LEADER supports are provided, actions should be included in the LECP Implementation Plan that support the relevant objectives in the LECP framework. The LECP Implementation Plan will work alongside the LEADER Local Development Strategies (LDS) required to support the implementation of the LEADER funding at a local level. As the LECP should reflect all actions that support the sustainable economic and community development of the area, LEADER actions should be reflected in the LECP Implementation Plan where appropriate and of significant importance.

Marie Cox then gave an overview of the relationship between LEADER and the LECP goals. She stated that the LECP should include only **collaborative** actions- actions that require a number of organisations to work together for a common good. Marie Cox stated that the three LECP High Level Goals will be:

- Economic Development
- Community Resilience and Wellbeing
- Climate Action and Biodiversity

The LEADER funding 2023-2027 will be €7.8M which will be broken down into three headings:

- Economic Development & Job Creation – €2.5m
- Rural Infrastructure & Social Inclusion - €1.66m
- Sustainable Development, Climate Change Mitigation & Adaptation - €1.66m

Brian Beck stated that this plan presented an opportunity to identify and assist communities who did not meet criteria previously. He praised the Community Team for the work they have put into the plan.

Cllr Ann Marie Ryan thanked Fiona Crotty and Marie Cox for their detailed presentation. She stated that there was a lot to consider. She also stated that climate change and adaptation would be a key aspect of the plan. She further stated that the Environmental Protection Agency said Ireland is projected to only cut emissions by 29% by 2030, compared to the goal of 51% which is 22% short. Cllr Ryan then asked whether the criteria for the Smart Village Strategy would exclude townlands such as Tipperary Town? Fiona Crotty stated that the Smart Village scheme would be dependant resources and capacity.

### **Item 3: Update on the Heritage Plan by Róisín O’Grady**

Róisín O’Grady gave an update on the Heritage Plan. She stated that the priority for 2023 will be the progression of the Heritage Plan. She stated that the Heritage Office would take a holistic approach when preparing the plan and would try to be as inclusive as possible as Heritage is constantly evolving. She stated that biodiversity has become very important for the nation and this is reflected in the imminent appointment of a new biodiversity officer for Tipperary County Council. She further stated that there is a great deal of interest in

heritage in County Tipperary. This interest comes from those who are interested in tourism which can be generated from the County's heritage and also those who are interested in protecting the County's environment. These two groups have a common interest which is the heritage of the County. Róisín O'Grady stated that Heritage 2030 and the upcoming National Biodiversity Plan will guide the direction of Tipperary County Council's Heritage Plan. Referring to the previous County Heritage Plan, Róisín O'Grady stated that €1.5m of funding was generated during the lifetime of this plan. She stated that Creative Ireland generated considerable funds and the fact that this programme resided with the Heritage showed the importance of the Heritage Office. She stated that the final draft of the Heritage Plan would be ready in Q4, 2023.

Cllr Ann Marie Ryan thanked Róisín O'Grady for her update. She stated that the economic benefits of heritage are clear with the footfall from tourism. She further stated that aligning the new plan's goals with Heritage 2030 makes sense. Finally, she praised Róisín O'Grady's work on the Glove Factory project in Tipperary Town which was a transformative project. Róisín O'Grady stated that the Glove Factory project had turned out very well and was a good example of how targeted funding can make a significant difference to a town.

#### **Item 4: Update on the Museum Service – Marie McMahon**

Marie McMahon gave an update on the Museum Service. She stated that the Civil War Exhibition was due to finish by mid-June. She also thanked Cllr Ambrose for arranging for Éamon Ó Cuív, TD to visit the exhibition on his recent visit to Clonmel. She stated that the Civil War Exhibition had been hugely successful. This success had led to the Museum receiving donations including artefacts relating to Dan Breen which was direct result of the exhibition. Marie McMahon also detailed a recent donation of photographs from the family of the late Paddy Cashin. She stated that the photos spanned from the early 1970's to the 1990s. These photos do not have names on them but the Museum will seek the public's help in getting names of those in the photos. Finally, Marie McMahon stated that visitor numbers are slowly returning to pre-pandemic levels and these figures were improving on a monthly basis.

#### **Item 5: Update on the Arts Service – Melanie Scott**

Melanie Scott provided an update on behalf of the Arts Section. She stated that the Bealtaine Festival had just finished after running for the month of May. She stated that Bealtaine was a collaboration between the Arts Office and the Libraries and this arrangement worked very well. This year's festival was launched in Roscrea Library. As part of this event, artist/folklorist Michael Fortune and participants from Age Friendly Roscrea showcased their work and findings from their recent folklore and reminiscence project. For the Tipperary Bealtaine Programme, Michael and the group have produced this material into a pop-up exhibition featuring images, text and films. A series of these films were shown at the launch and some of the participants spoke about their positive experiences. Melanie

Scott also stated that although the festival had just finished and was not fully appraised, there was a sense that user numbers were up for the first time since the pandemic.

**Item 6: Update on the Library Service – Damien Dullaghan**

Damien Dullaghan gave an update on the Library Service. He gave a brief overview on the Bealtaine Festival and reiterated Melanie Scott’s comments regarding the success of the festival.

Damien Dullaghan also gave a brief overview of the current events and outreach activities which were scheduled to take place throughout the county. He also gave an overview of a new initiative the Library Service was participating in. This is a pilot project to make ecology equipment freely available for citizens looking to join the fight against biodiversity loss. The Heritage Council is working with ten library services across the county, of which Tipperary is one, to make Citizen Science Kits available for loan through libraries. It is expected the kits will be used by students looking to conduct their own studies, amateur ecologists and by community groups such as Tidy Towns, River Trusts and Field Groups who want to gather information to bolster local biodiversity projects. Damien Dullaghan stated that the kit is free to borrow for members of Tipperary County Council Library Service.

Damien Dullaghan outlined the current situation with the new national Library Strategy. He stated that the launch of the new strategy had been delayed and was now due to be launched in July or August He stated that he would present an overview of the strategy to the SPC once it was launched. He also confirmed that the Libraries Unit in the Department of Rural and Community had requested that all local authorities delay the preparation of their own local strategies until the national strategy was launched. This will mean that in future, local strategies will be prepared after the national one was launched.

**Dates of future meetings**

The next meeting has been scheduled for

Friday 1<sup>st</sup> September, 2023 (subsequently changed to 13<sup>th</sup> October – DD)

This concluded the business of the Meeting.

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

**Councillor Andy Moloney,**

**Chairperson.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_, 2023