SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL



**REPORT OF THE ARTS, CULTURE, GAEILGE, HERITAGE & LIBRARIES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 4th May 2022**

**Venue: MS Teams Meeting**

**In attendance:**

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| **Members** | **Council Officials** |
| Cllr. Alan Edge (Chair) | Paul Fusco | County Librarian |
| Cllr. Peter Kavanagh (Mayor)  | Rosaleen Dwyer | Heritage Officer |
| Cllr. Alan Hayes  | Orla Scannell | Arts Officer |
| Cllr. Teresa Costello |  |  |
| Cllr. Mick Duff |  |  |

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| **Sectoral Members** |
| Elaine Vince O'Hara |
| Freda Manweiler |

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| **Apologies** |
| Cllr. K. Egan, Mr. Jason Frehill, Director of Service. |

**The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Alan Edge.**

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge opened the meeting at 17:33

**Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes**

The [minutes](http://intranet/cmas/documentsview.aspx?id=75036) of Arts, Culture, Gaeilge, Heritage & Libraries SPC meeting held on 2nd February 2022 were proposed by Chair Cllr. Alan Edge and seconded by Cllr. Teresa Costello.

**Agreed.**

**Item 2: Tallaght Cultural Quarter – Chamber Square**

Paul Fusco, County Librarian, presented a [report](http://intranet/cmas/documentsview.aspx?id=75073) on the context, status and future planning of the Tallaght Cultural Quarter, highlighting the track record of collaboration between cultural organisations in this area. Taking into consideration the extension of the Cultural Quarter to include Tallaght Stadium, and the inclusion of County Hall as a 4th side of Chamber Square, the focus now is to consider how best to spend what is left of the Collaborative Fund.

The next step identified was to put together a working group with a focus on developing a cohesive vision for integration into the upcoming development strategies as it was determined that branding will emerge organically from this. Particular attention was paid to the development of the night-time economy, highlighting issues such as consultation with residents, transport, safety, and security concerns.

Following the presentation, questions were invited from the members.

Cllr. Teresa Costello welcomed the planning and forward-thinking going into the Cultural Quarter while stressing the importance of cohesive design, noting Tallaght village in this regard. Cllr. Costello enquired about the composition of membership of the working group and noted she would be happy to suggest people for inclusion within it.

Cllr. Alan Edge asked whether the formation of the working group was within the remit of the evening’s meeting, or whether the group would be formed subsequently.

Cllr. Alan Edge commented on the importance of marketing and asked whether users of the extended Cultural Quarter (to include Tallaght Stadium) would be able to identify that they were in the Cultural Quarter while in these spaces.

Cllr. Alan Edge also noted he would support the representation, within the working group, of users of Rua Red, the Civic Theatre and County Library, along with open space programme users.

Cllr. Mick Duff supported Cllr. Edge’s comment.

Paul Fusco responded to questions asked and agreed to circulate the fuller report, from which his presentation was taken, to the group and to the Area Committee, in advance of the formation of the working group.

The report was **Noted**.

**Item 3: Update from the Heritage Officer**

Ms. Rosaleen Dwyer, Heritage Officer, presented a [report](http://intranet/cmas/documentsview.aspx?id=75072) on the context, role and current focus of the Heritage Officer programme. Ms. Dwyer focused on several established and ongoing heritage projects, including the position of a Community Archaeologist for the Dublin Mountains; the ‘Threading the Tower’ crochet and haute couture project; the Corkagh podcasts and the County Biodiversity Plan.

When discussing the Dublin Mountains, Ms. Dwyer outlined the consequences of increased visitor numbers to these areas, noting concerns relating to damage to biodiversity, signage and historic monuments. In addition, Ms. Dwyer spoke about her work relating to the County Heritage Plan and the timeline envisioned for the consultation and drafting processes.

Following the presentation, questions were invited from the members.

Cllr. Alan Hayes expressed his appreciation of the work of the Heritage Officer and asked for more information on the formation of the Heritage Plan, asking whether the time for input/ideas/suggestions/concerns was at the consultation stage or before the document goes out for consultation.

Cllr. Alan Edge acknowledged the concerns raised regarding the balance of usage on the Dublin Mountains and suggested that users may not be aware of what they are looking at when visiting these sites. He asked whether there may be a role for the council in signposting these elements, or whether this was only within the remit of the Office of Public Works (OPW), or the National Monuments Service (NMS), and wondered where the crossover is in the work of the NMS, OPW and the Council.

Rosaleen Dwyer responded to the questions raised.

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge requested that the group be kept up to date on the work of the Heritage Officer and thanked Ms. Dwyer.

The report was **Noted**.

**Item 4: Libraries Development Plan – Update**

Paul Fusco, County Librarian, presented an update on the Libraries Development Plan. This plan will span 2023-2027 and Mr. Fusco reported that the process has already begun in libraries. His presentation focussed on the process of developing the plan, rather than on the plan itself, identifying the desire for a plan which allows for flexibility, and a subsequent approach for the plan which moves away from a classic strategy to a design-led strategy. He noted the work being done with Think Actionable consultants, outlined the Strategy Planning Schedule and anticipated having a draft circulated to the SPC in September, and to the full council in October.

Following the presentation, questions were invited from the members.

Cllr. Alan Edge acknowledged the exciting vision evident in the planning process.

Elaine O’Hara expressed her appreciation for the work going into the Library Development Plan, identified potential areas for future collaboration between libraries and Tallaght AES, and noted her anticipation of future opportunities to work together.

Cllr. Alan Hayes enquired about the nature of consultations planned for May and June, whether they were to be in person or online, and if they would be held in a variety of branches. He agreed that flexibility is key to a successful plan and noted the key role that libraries can play in shaping young people’s futures through development and improving employability and noted the importance of potential future opportunities to focus on practical skills and trades in this regard.

Cllr. Alan Edge observed the value in involving Councillors, the SPC and Area Committees in the consultation process and noted that the lifespan of the plan will likely see a number of exciting developments within libraries. He asked whether libraries may be entitled to any census data to aid with planning.

Paul Fusco responded to the questions raised and agreed to check dates for a possible meeting between the SPC and the Think Big Space.

The Update was **NOTED**

**Item 5: Action Items**

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge invited contributions for Action Items.

Paul Fusco will determine suggested dates for meetings with Think Big Space.

Paul Fusco will circulate the Cultural Quarter Documents as requested.

These items were **Noted**.

**Item 6: Any Other Business**

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge raised an item sent forward by May Cllr. Peter Kavanagh re Coiste na Gaeilge which met on 26th April at 6pm.

The members agreed that Cllr. Kavanagh as chair would liaise with Muintir Chrónáin, Gaelphobal Tamhlachta and Conradh na Gaeilge on Seachtain na Gaeilge 2022 and report back to the SPC with suggestions for Seachtain na Gaeilge 2023.

The request was **Noted.**

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge thanked members for their attendance.

**The meeting concluded at 18:58.**