SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL



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

**MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 1ST FEBRUARY 2023**

**Venue: South Dublin County Council Chambers & Microsoft Teams**

**Attended:**

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| **Members** | **Council Officials** |
| Cllr. Alan Edge (Chair) | Jason Frehill | Director of Service |
| Cllr. Mick Duff | Paul Fusco | County Librarian |
| Cllr. Teresa Costello | Ms. Orla Scannell | Arts Officer |
|  | Ms. Rosaleen Dwyer | Heritage Officer |
|  | Ms. Geraldine O Meara | Senior Executive librarian |
|  | Ms. Meabh Butler | Assistant Arts Officer |

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| **Sectoral Members** |
| Elaine Vince O'HaraMs. Freda Manweiler |

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| **Apologies** |
| Cllr. Alan Hayes, Cllr. Kenneth Egan |

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

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge opened the meeting at 17.32 and welcomed everyone.

**Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes**

The [minutes](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=77797) of Arts, Culture, Gaeilge, Heritage & Libraries SPC meeting held on 2nd November 2022 were proposed by Cllr Alan Edge and seconded by Cllr Mick Duff.

**Agreed.**

**Item 2: Libraries Development Plan – Implementation/Year 1 Priorities**

Paul Fusco, County Librarian, presented a [Overview](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=77798) on the status of South Dublin Libraries Development Plan 2023 – 2027 – Our Library Our Future. The plan was adopted by South Dublin Council on 12th December 2022. It is currently being translated into Irish and is due for completion in the coming weeks. We will have a public launch in the Spring, at a time where it will receive maximum attention. The launch will possibly coincide with the launch of extended opening hours of Palmerstown Hub.

Implementation of the plan is underway. Champions have been appointed and are tasked with carrying out an audit of South Dublin library services in the areas championed. The audits will evaluate our current standing and identify needs/gaps in relation to information, facilities, and customer service. Audits will be completed by end of April 2023. In terms of Technology, we are drafting up procurement documents to upgrade our RFID self service kiosks and install My Open Library.

Paul Fusco spoke about the opening hours of the library service being extended. Palmerstown Library Hub has switched to Wednesday/Thursday opening. Friday/Saturday opening of the Hub is dependent on recruitment of 2 part time library assistants. This recruitment has been approved by Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage and is in the pipeline with SDCC recruitment. The introduction of My Open Library next year will provide additional opening hours and will offer the public accessibility to library services 365 days a year. Additional resources have been applied to improve the reliability of mobile library services. A relief pool of three drivers has been created. This means that fewer stops will be cancelled and allows for the participation in festivals such as the St. Patricks Day Parade.

Following the presentation, chair Cllr Alan Edge invited questions from the members.

Cllr Mick Duff commended the progress of the plan and commented that it was amazing to see the strategic planning moving forward so quickly. He passed on his compliments to the staff involved. Cllr Mick Duff was excited to hear about the additional openings hours and thought Palmerstown Hub would be an ideal location for the launch of the Development Plan. He is looking forward to seeing the introduction of My Open Library to South Dublin.

Cllr Teresa Costello commented on the great work being done in libraries in the areas of inclusiveness and outreach and how the libraries have expanded their offering. Cllr Alan Edge agreed with the Cllr’s comments and endorsed all that was said. He commented that he passed one of his favourite libraries when he was in Oslo, and it was amazing to see people in there at 10pm. Cllr Edge commented that it is great to see this service coming into our libraries and is something to look forward to in the future.

The report was **Noted**.

**Item 3: Heritage Plan – Update/Public Consultation**

Rosaleen Dwyer presented a [Review of Heritage Plan Update](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=77799) whose objective is to set out a framework for the protection, conservation, promotion and management of the County’s heritage for the period of the plan. The review is set within the context of the Council’s Corporate Plan and the objectives of the County Development Plan 2022 – 2028. The new Heritage Plan will be guided by the objectives of the 2022 National Heritage Plan ‘ Heritage 2030’ which sets out actions under three key themes of ‘Communities, Leadership and Partnership’. It aims to reflect the importance of ongoing collaboration between the Local Authority, Government Agencies, communities, heritage organisations, and individuals in caring an planning for our shared heritage. Rosaleen confirmed the Plan’s preparation will involve both internal consultation and public consultation processes and she outlined the Review stages and expected timeframes, culminating in finalising the South Dublin County Heritage Plan in Q4 of 2023.

Following the presentation, questions were invited from the members.

Cllr Teresa Costello commented that she is looking forward to see what findings the Heritage Plan come back with. She noted that Heritage is very important to the county and it was great to see such a focus on Heritage and the Community.

Cllr Edge agreed and said it was great to see the themes of “Community, Leadership and Partnership” in the National Heritage Plan as well. He noted that History can often be unseen and unappreciated and looks forward to the by in and greater understanding from communities.

The report was **Noted**.

**Item 4: In Context 5: Public Art Programme under % for Art Programme**

Meabh Butler, Assistant Arts Officer, presented a report on [In Context 5 - CONNECT](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=77800) - South Dublin County Council’s Public Art Programme under the % for Art Scheme 2022-2025. Orla explained it’s background, it’s main features and it’s evolution from In Context 4. Orla outlined In Context 5’s strategy development and the elements within it and detailed the budget breakdown by Construction project within Strand 1 of the programme. In summary, Context 5 – Connect should provide a foundation upon which we will build a future heritage to be proud of. Meabh then updated the members on the Current Position and next steps.

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge thanked and welcomed Meabh and invited questions.

Cllr. Teresa Costello commented that she is looking forward to engagement with the Public Art Programme. She said others might disagree but she has seen graffiti art in housing estates in the past that has not aged well. Cllr Costello noted that it’s important to liaise with the communities that the artwork is being produced in to ensure it is relevant to their area and maintained.

Cllr Mick Duff agreed with Cllr Costellos comments and mentioned that many years back there was an intergenerational mural created with Foroige that was very good but not looked after. Cllr Duff suggested that murals that are sustainable and maintained would be preferable such as the mural at Scoil Íosa. He commented that he is delighted to hear about the next steps of the Arts Programme and knows the current programme in schools such as St Aidans, is superb. Cllr Duff hopes to see Tallaght Community School included in the future of the programme.

Cllr. Alan Edge mentioned his involvement with the Public Art Steering Group and said it is exciting to hear about the Public Art Programme. Cllr. Edge commented that the programme and community engagement is even more important now in terms of the development and integration of migrants and welcoming them to the community. He suggested this is an area to perhaps look at working on in the future. Cllr Edge commented that arts mentorship has gone very well in Rua Red and Tallaght Community Arts and congratulated staff on their work.

The report was **Noted**.

**Item 5: Cultural Quarter Working Group**

Paul Fusco, County Librarian, presented [an update](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=77801) on the Cultural Quarter. He proposed the working group needed to investigate the integration of CQ into upcoming development strategies: Libraries, Rua Red and the Civic Theatre. He suggested that while they are collocated, they are not necessarily cohesive and have resulted in crossovers and conflicts in programming. Areas for the CQ working group to focus on include branding, demand analysis and vision development. The presentation showed the current composition of the Cultural Working Group and a proposed breakdown of budget going forward.

Following the presentation, questions were invited from the members.

Cllr. Alan Edge commented that he was co-opted to be chair of the Cultural Quarter Working Group after Cllr. Peter Kavanagh left, and it is now in his remit as chair of the Arts, Culture, Heritage, Gaeilge and Libraries SPC to see this group activated and get underway. Cllr. Edge mentioned that they cannot set a meeting date today as they do not have a full quorum.

Cllr. Mick Duff expressed his delight at the composition of the working group. He enquired if there were any plans to be included for County Hall as it could be used as an arts and heritage space also. He commented that it is a significant public building and asked if various works could be exhibited in the public space. Jason Frehill noted that it was a good suggestion. He pointed to the successful provision of My Doorstep in County Hall in using the public space to engage with members of the community. It was suggested the space in County Hall could be used and included for Culture Night .

Cllr. Alan Edge agreed with Paul Fusco’s point of wasted space at the back of Rua Red and Library and events such as the Black Lives Matter Solidarity Demonstration that took place showed how the space could be put to good use. He commented it would be good to get a meeting date for Cultural Working Group before the end of February. Paul Fusco agreed to get a meeting date in place by then.

Cllr. Teresa Costello was co opted onto the Cultural Quarter Working Group by agreement. Paul Fusco to follow up with an email.

The report was **Noted**.

**Item 6 : Action Items**

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge invited contributions for Action Items.

Cllr. Alan Edge highlighted a number of vacancies in Cllr. Peter Kavanagh’s absence. They urgently need someone to take his place on the board of Rua Red and it needs to be an elected member from this SPC. Cllr Teresa Costello was put forward to sit on the board. This was supported by Cllr. Mick Duff.

These items were **Noted**.

**Item 7: Any Other Business**

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge invited contributions for Action Items.

Cllr. Mick Duff put forward his thanks to Cllr. Alan Edge and commented on a fantastic job he did as Chair of the SPC.

Chair Cllr. Alan Edge thanked members for their attendance.

**The meeting concluded at 18.19.**

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