**ARTS, CULTURE, HERITAGE, GAEILGE & LIBRARIES SPC**

**Meeting 6th September 2023 (17:30) – South Dublin County Council IT Conference room & Microsoft Teams**

**MINUTES**

**Attended:**

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| **Members** | **Sectoral Members** |
| Cllr Guss O’Connell (Chair) | Ms. Elaine Vince-O’Hara |
| Cllr. Alan Hayes | Ms. Freda Manweiler |
| Cllr. Mark Lynch |  |
| Cllr. Mick Duff |  |
| Cllr. Teresa Costello |  |

**Apologies:** Cllr. Kenneth Egan, Mr. Jason Frehill

**Officials present:**

Mr. Paul Fusco , County Librarian

Ms. Edel Clancy, A/Senior Exec Officer

Ms. Maria Nugent, A/Administrative Officer

Ms. Maoilíosa Boyle, Director of Rua Red

Ms. Liz Corry, Snr Executive librarian

Ms. Sile Coleman, Snr Executive librarian

Ms. Meabh Butler, Assistant Arts Officer

Ms. Rosaleen Dwyer, Heritage Officer

**Minute-taker:**

Ms Cliona Graham

**The meeting was Chaired by Cllr. Guss O’Connell.**

Chair Cllr. Guss O’Connell opened the meeting at 17.30 and welcomed everyone.

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| **Headed Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes**  The [minutes](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80058) of Arts, Culture, Gaeilge, Heritage & Libraries SPC meeting held on 3rd May 2023 were proposed by Cllr. Mick Duff and seconded by Cllr. Teresa Costello.  **Agreed.**  Chair Cllr. Guss O’Connell enquired and confirmed there were no matters arising. |

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| **Headed Item 2: Local, Economic and Community Draft Plan**  Ms. Maria Nugent presented a report entitled ‘[South Dublin County LECP 2023 2028’](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80061). The report outlined the Local, Economic and Community Draft Plan Process, the five stages involved and that it currently sits at the final step of Stage 1. The Stage one steps including the Socio-economic analysis conducted, subsequent engagement and feedback were discussed and have led to the drafting of the Socio-economic Statement and High-Level Goals Preparation by the Advisory Group. The report and goals are presented for sign off by SPC and LCDC. Maria outlined and discussed the five overarching themes within the LECP draft plan as follows - People and Place, Health and Wellbeing, Learning and working, Climate Action and SMART County. Each theme identified is supported by its Economic and Community objectives and actions, and has a corresponding draft high level goal. The goals are– Our LECP includes actions to support people living and working in the county of South Dublin, Our LECP is focussed on improving health, safety and wellbeing of all, Our LECP is focused on increasing access to lifelong learning and upskilling opportunities for all, Our LECP is focused on supporting people living and working in SDCC to make the transition to a low carbon County and finally Our LECP is focussed on supporting a smart, sustainable and socially inclusive County through SMART led initiatives and skills development. Ms. Maria Nugent noted upcoming workshops which she invited members to attend.  Chair Cllr. Guss O’Connell commended the work to date.  The report was **Noted**. |

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| **Headed Item 3: Rua Red Presentation**  Ms. Maoilíosa Boyle, Director of Rua Red, gave a [presentation on Rua Red](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80059) which annually sees 200,000 users/visitors, via 4000+ bookings, with 900 member organisations. Funded by a budget of €914,113 which includes Programme expenditure of €234,060, Rua Red services are provided by 8.5 FTE programme and operations staff alongside 5 café and housekeeping staff. It’s wide-ranging and diverse services include programmes such as Exhibition, Education and Outreach, Dance and Emerging Artists and includes collaborations with Third level and Community groups, hosting Creative and Traveller residencies, Festivals and events and providing Artists Studios. Rua Red supports Artists and Community through its 900 member organisations which includes groups representing Youth, Older People, public services, educational, Community and Voluntary and Health and wellbeing groups. It provides full time, low cost, serviced office space for creative enterprises and community organisations as well as 8 Artists’ studios, 11 resident organisations & initiatives, 1 professional practice residency with NCAD, 1 dancer in residence, 1 YPCE artist in residence and 4 traveller residencies.  Maoilíosa presented the programme highlights for 2022 which included the Magdalene Series – a new work by leading female Irish artists, whose production directly employed over 250 artists, technicians, facilitators, writers, film makers and photographers and which reached over 500,000. Also supported by Creative Ireland, SDCC Arts office and the Arts Council the programme included artists talks, panel events, performance workshops, public tours, school tour and workshops, video education packages for schools and a documentary film broadcast. The series generated an online reach of over 3 million, was featured on RTE radio and TV, appeared on national and international press and generated 88 thousand website hits. Visitor feedback was very enthusiastic, commending the venue’s ethos, design and wonderful staff and welcoming its vibrant, relevant, democratic, and insightful material.  Discussing the new Programme for 2023 and 2024 entitled ‘Displacement and Belonging’ , Maoilíosa noted that SDCC is one of Ireland’s most culturally rich and diverse counties with over 93 nationalities and 60 spoken languages. Rua Red’s mission is to support the creation, production and delivery of Arts and cultural activity within that framework to challenge audiences at local, national, and international levels. The Programme looks at the obstacles and rules that create cultural disconnection which prevent a sense of belonging. Series of programme workshops such as ‘Morag Myerscough - Belonging’ and ‘Array Collective Residency’, in collaboration with The Irish Refugee Council Youth and the Glencree Centre for Peace and Reconciliation have worked with and supported our newly arrived and Ukrainian community to produce a body of work around their individual stories.  Upcoming Programme highlights include Sofft Productions – Culture night in collaboration with Tallaght Library, the Civic and Contact Studio, an Irish Prison Service exhibition, 2024 Tallaght Performance Art Festival, Marianne Keating Touring Exhibition, Education block with NCAD and TU and Traveller Media Production Residencies.  Following the presentation, Chair Cllr. Guss O’Connell, Cllr. Teresa Costello and Cllr. Mick Duff thanked Maoilíosa and all the team in Rua Red for the extensive and important programming work being done for the County and the vibrancy and life it brings to the area. The support given to refugees to record their stories and to feel part of the community was commended.  Maoilíosa responded to questions.  The report was **Noted**. |

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| **Headed Item 4: Our Library, Our Future – SDL Champions**   * 1. **Heritage & Placemaking**   Senior Executive librarian, Ms. Sile Coleman ,presented a report on her champion role encompassing [Heritage and Placemaking](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80060) which is one of the five development areas in Our Library, Our Future, South Dublin Libraries Development Plan 2023 - 2027. Sharing our stories, Making our places encapsulates Heritage and Placemaking and Libraries, sitting at the heart of communities play an important role in engendering a sense of pride in our origins and localities and developing a sense of who we are. Libraries hold the recorded memory of the County in our local studies collection which will continue to be an area of focus. Another area of focus is collecting ‘new heritage’, creating as well as curating our County’s heritage and helping a sense of pride of place to develop in our communities. Our local studies collection of over 13,000 items, is mainly held in Tallaght library. Our Digital Collections include ‘Source: Our digital archive, Historical Mapping, South Dublin history, Ask about Ireland and Our Heroes websites. Libraries also provide access to Irish Newspaper archive and find my past genealogy sites. Sile discussed some of the digitised Source material which includes the Irish Revolutionary Period Collection of almost 900 photographs, documents and ephemera relating to the decade of centenaries period. It brings together material from a number of institutions, museums, archives and libraries and includes 26 issues of the Irish Bulletin newspaper which was the official gazette of the Provisional Government during the War of Independence.  History and Heritage programmes and events are well established across the branch library network with 99 History and Heritage events held in 2022, attended by nearly 2500 people. and the History and Heritage Programme each year incorporates National Heritage week supported by the Heritage Officer.  The Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021 – 2023 explores and reflects on the impact of the pivotal events of 100 years ago at both a national and local level through cultural events, historical reflections, lectures and exhibitions. It includes the Historian in Residence Programme, Artist in Residence Programme, Lecture series, ‘Riots, Rifles and Rebels’ book, Rathfarnham Revolutionary Trail app, Genealogy Course and Oral history and Digital folklore course.  Placemaking, aimed at creating new local history collections is supported by a number of programmes. “Voices from Ukraine” which supported Ukrainian refugees to document their experiences, was shortlisted for an Excellence in Local Government Award. “History all Around Us” which culminated in a Colouring book of Rathfarnham historical images and places, “Ourselvesopedia” and “I love South Dublin County” photo competition also featured along with “Covid Memories” which aimed to address children’s lack of representation during previous revolutionary times by working to create an archive of children’s experiences during the pandemic. Current projects include an exhibition on the life and works of W.M. Letts, Corkagh Archive Digitisation, Woodville archive cataloguing, Historian in residence programme, the Red line book Festival decade of Centenaries seminar and placemaking projects for Adamstown/Clonburris.  Cllr. Guss O Connell, thanked Sile for a very engaging presentation and held questions and contributions until after the next presentation.   * 1. **Outreach & Engagement.**   Ms. Liz Corry, Senior Executive librarian, presented a report on the [Outreach & Engagement](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80060) champion role, it’s aims, objectives and initiatives . Liz discussed the membership drive and outreach programs/initiatives, which, following on from Covid lockdowns, aim to restore membership numbers, encourage the public back into libraries, and look to address any missing demographics within library membership. Promoted by a staff membership team, the membership drive aims to help promote SDCC library service to new members by proactively reaching out to community, breaking down barriers to membership and highlighting awareness in staff and branches. Outreach programmes and initiatives were supported by each branch and mobile libraries and included attendance at job fairs, community events and refugee reception hubs and initiatives such as ‘pin your pride’ badge collection. Working to break down barriers to library membership through simplified forms, quick links via QR codes and working to change both perception and physical library space to encourage youth membership has delivered results both in membership numbers and event attendance in 2022. In 2023, Tallaght Library developed a new space called ‘The Loft” aimed at giving teenagers an exclusive space within libraries. This space incorporates a pool table and is now home to a pool club and in promoting them to ‘Make it Our’s ‘, it’s walls contain a number of graffiti style art installations produced by pool club members in collaboration with street artist facilitators. Liz outlined other new innovative initiatives for attracting young adults to library services by having young adult library ambassadors – The Hex – Noise DJ’s and late night events. Future membership campaigns include ‘New Member November’ which will focus on ‘missing’ demographics and include events to showcase library resources and the benefits of membership.  Cllr. Guss O Connell, thanked Sile and Liz and invited questions and comments.  Cllr. Alan Hayes commended the presentations and the extensive and innovative work being done and raised questions around engagement, availability of online events and library membership renewals. Ms Liz Corry confirmed that during Covid, online events such as talks with Child Psychologist Dr David Coleman had attendance of over 2000, which was part funded by libraries, but that in person events were now prevalent. Mr Paul Fusco confirmed that investment in live streaming technology would be adopted in a number of branches in the coming year. Ms Liz Corry and Ms Sile Coleman responded to questions raised.  The reports were **Noted**. |
| **Headed Item 5: Threading the Tower – re-imagining the Clondalkin Round Tower**  Ms. Rosaleen Dwyer, Heritage Officer presented a report [‘Threading the Tower – reimagining the Clondalkin Round Tower’](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80062) which was funded through Creative Ireland South Dublin Project Strand 2022 as part of the SDCC Heritage plan. This project was led by the Irish Crochet Lace Revival group (ICLR) and partnered by Irish Lace artist Fiona Harrington who worked in collaboration with the wider community of crochet makers from Clondalkin and beyond. It built upon the community relationship that commenced with the 2021 collaborative cultural heritage video project for National Heritage week, ‘Clondalkin’s Tangible Threads – Irish crochet in the world of haute couture’ which highlighted the role Clondalkin crochet makers had in designing and creating crochet motifs for the haute couture gowns of Sybil Connolly in the 1950’s and 60’s. The Threading the Tower project sought to explore the relationship between the iconic heritage feature of medieval Clondalkin round tower and the generations of local women who made Irish Crochet and other laces and who lived and worked around it. In creating a reimagined Clondalkin Round Tower in Crochet lace, it celebrates and strengthens the living heritage of fine crochet lace that remains in the Clondalkin community despite the general lapse in the practice of handcrafts today. It further aimed to engage with community crochet makers in the sharing, teaching and revival of the techniques of crochet lace. Over 35 contributors submitted motifs, and through the re-creation and inclusion of the 1950’s motif in ‘The Clondalkin Crochet Lace Tower’, it sought to highlight the local haute couture connections and to strengthen recent relationships built through ‘Clondalkin’s Tangible thread’s’. After a period of over 18 months, The Clondalkin Crochet Lace Tower creation was unveiled by Cllr. Francis Timmons, deputising for the Mayor, at a National Heritage week event in Clondalkin library on Wednesday 16th August 2023 and it will remain there until mid-September, when it will be exhibited at other SDCC libraries. It will later go on permanent display in Brú Chrónáin, the Round Tower Visitor Centre, Clondalkin.  Chair Cllr Guss O Connell praised the project and its achievements. Ms Rosaleen Dwyer confirmed they had received great feedback on the project and confirmed to Ms Maebh Butler they had been in touch with the Craft Council of Ireland and also commented on the benefits obtained by descendants of historic lace makers in bringing memories to life.  The report was **Noted**. |
| **Headed Item 6 : Update on Libraries Capital Developments**  Mr Paul Fusco, County Librarian presented an update on [Libraries Capital Developments](http://intranet/cmas/documentsbyitem.aspx?itemid=80063) including planned developments of new libraries in Citywest, Adamstown and Rathcoole along with the planned refurbishments of Clondalkin and Tallaght libraries. The Citywest procurement process is in its final stages with details expected to be announced at the October Council meeting. SDCC will purchase the completed 1000+sq m. library developed by private contractor and will then fit out and stock it prior to opening to the public in 2026. Adamstown Library, another 1000+ sq. m full time branch, is to be developed by Quintain as part of the delivery of the SDZ. The library will be co-located with an Enterprise Centre which provides an opportunity to have a Council owned landmark building. The County Development plan objectives support the delivery of a new library service in Rathcoole environs to meet the needs of the expanding population in a small part-time branch (Library Hub) operating approx. 40 hrs a week. Opportunities are currently being explored with Community Department, while investigating other sites. Paul noted that refurbishment of Clondalkin library would entail the addition of a lift block to provide universal access to the second storey which provides the opportunity to upgrade the building’s internal environment to the same standard of the other libraries in South Dublin’s branch network. Part 8 process is expected to commence by the end of 2023. Refurbishment of Tallaght Library in the context of the new Innovation Centre, Heritage Centre, public realm and Cultural Quarter development is expected to commence via Part 8 in 2024. Tallaght library was last refurbished in 2008 and has an annual footfall of over 200,000 and refurbishment and redesign of existing space and a new Chamber square facade in conjunction with new study hub, Makerspace and local studies facilities is envisaged. Local area maps showing library branch network in the context of Sustainable Travel/Walkability study encouraged engagement regarding future possibilities.  Chair Cllr. Guss O Connell invited questions.  Chair Cllr Guss O Connell, Elaine Vince O Hara and Cllr. Alan Hayes expressed thanks for an interesting presentation setting out a challenging body of work and welcoming Palmerstown Library’s expanded hours. Paul Fusco responded to questions regarding the annual library membership renewal, email reminders and the requirement for photo id.  The report was No**ted**.  -----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------  **Headed Item 7: Action Items**  Chair Cllr. Guss O Connell invited contributions for Action Items.  No Action Items were raised. |
| **Headed Item 8: Any Other Business**  Chair Cllr. Guss O Connell invited contributions for Any Other Business.  No items were raised.  Chair Cllr. Guss O Connell thanked members for their attendance.  **The meeting concluded at 19:05** |