

SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL



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

MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 12TH DECEMBER 2024 @17:30

Venue - South Dublin County Council IT Conference Room & Microsoft Teams

Attended:

Members	Council Officials	
Cllr Louise Dunne (Chair)	Mr Jason Frehill	Director of Services, EETD
Cllr Dean Donnelly	Mr Paul Fusco	County Librarian
Cllr. Eoin Ó Broin	Ms Muireann Ni Cheannabhain	Irish Language Officer
	Ms. Meabh Butler	Assistant Arts Officer

Sectoral Members

Ms Emma Kennedy
Mr Noel Galvin
Ms Yemi Ojo

Apologies

Cllr Sarah Barnes, Cllr Darragh Adelaide, Cllr Glen Moore,
Ms Orla Scannell, Ms Rosaleen Dwyer, Ms Geraldine O Meara

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr. Louise Dunne.

Chair Cllr Louise Dunne opened the meeting at 5.30pm, introduced herself, welcomed everyone and invited everyone to introduce themselves.

Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes

The [minutes of the Arts Culture Gaeilge Heritage & Libraries SPC](#) meeting held on 1st May 2024 were proposed by Mr Jason Frehill and seconded by Mr Paul Fusco.
Agreed.

Chair Cllr. Louise Dunne enquired and confirmed there were no matters arising.

Item 2: Libraries Capital Programme Update

Mr. Paul Fusco presented and discussed a report titled '[South Dublin Libraries Capital Programme Update](#)'. The following areas were addressed; Planned Developments within Citywest, Adamstown, Rathcoole, Clondalkin Refurbishments, Tallaght Refurbishments and future developments. Planned capital expenditure of €15 million over the next three years was outlined and breakdown given for new libraries in Adamstown and Citywest, refurbishments of Clondalkin and Tallaght libraries and Libraries ICT projects to include IT, My Open Library, Digitisation, STEAM & Neurodiverse programmes.

Citywest library, with an estimated 2 years construction from vacant possession in early 2025, will be located within Citywest Shopping Centre, will extend to 1600sm² and be delivered by 2027. Profile building and community engagement are in train with regular mobile library stops attracting 1500 visitors since April.

Adamstown library, to be co-located within a council owned landmark building, will extend to 1000sm². Located near The Crossings retail complex, adjacent to Adamstown train station, it will have an expected 9000 homes in the vicinity.

Rathcoole library - Location opportunities for Rathcoole library hub are being considered with a preference for a central village location. One possibility of utilising the historic Rathcoole courthouse building was discussed.

Clondalkin library - Refurbishment plans for the Clondalkin library listed building aren't finalised yet. The Part 8 Public consultation process is due to close in January, with outcomes going back to Councilors in February. It's expected that answers to building treatment and finances can then be determined. As South Dublin Libraries sole heritage building, the preservation of Clondalkin library's character and façade is paramount while looking to provide a fully accessible modern facility. It's envisaged that the boilerhouse may be redeveloped to provide lift access to the 1st floor, however public access to the turret will not be possible.

Cyclical Upgrades - Provision has been made within Cyclical upgrades budget for design consultancy in 2025 to refurbish Tallaght library which is on track to exceed 250k visitors this year. The aim is to refurbish and redesign the existing space, improve the Chamber square façade, provide a study hub and Makerspace along with improving the local studies facilities.

Parthalán place - The newly designated Parthalán place's importance, including location, components, marketing, promotion and recognition for the Cultural campus were noted. Parthalán place is expected to have an annual footfall of 650k, which exceeds publicly available figures for Lexicon and Mill combined. It's also noted that the total footfall for South Dublin libraries is expected to be in excess of 936k this year.

Where Next? - Sustainable travel/walkability study maps and immediate catchment areas outlined the current library service locations and those planned within the current Libraries Development plan. They also highlighted possible future development and expansion of library services which may be required to serve expected population growth in Tallaght, Rathcoole, Ballycullen, Clonburris and CityEdge and currently underserved areas like Newcastle.

Chair Cllr. Louise Dunne thanked Paul Fusco and invited questions.

Cllr. Eoin Ó Broin posed questions including an enquiry regarding online location search options for Parthalán place, the status of current libraries mobile service to Newcastle, the proposed size of CityWest library as a comparison to North Clondalkin library and the process of monitoring library footfall. He also expressed the importance of maintaining the architectural integrity of Clondalkin library while preserving functionality.

Paul Fusco noted that Parthalán place had been registered with Google Maps and An Post, that mobile services are available in Newcastle, CityWest will be larger than North Clondalkin library, that library branch footfall monitoring is mechanised and confirmed the conservation officer's involvement in any proposed changes to Clondalkin library.

Ms Yemi Ojo enquired about the criteria for using Parthalán square space for events, advocated for availability of casual dining there and enquired about the possibility of libraries providing permanent exhibition space for multicultural sculptures. Paul Fusco replied stating that Corporate services are responsible for managing Parthalán place and that event requests can be put to them or any of the three institutions – Rua Red, The Civic theatre or Tallaght library. He noted libraries would have difficulties regarding available permanent exhibition space and would lack the capacity to curate such collections.

Cllr. Louise Dunne enquired about envisaged CityWest and Adamstown library staffing levels, queried current ownership of Rathcoole Courthouse, expressed her interest in maintaining the current aesthetic of Clondalkin Library and enquired about the status of possible library services in BallyCullen and Firhouse.

Paul Fusco responded to all questions and noted that staffing levels for CityWest, based on square footage, would exceed North Clondalkin library of between 10 and 12, with an additional staff member needed for relief services. He confirmed Rathcoole courthouse is in current use and is in SDCC ownership and that talks with the planning office have taken place regarding possible library location options for Ballycullen/Firhouse. He also noted a conservation officer's involvement with the Clondalkin library redevelopment and the commitment to treating the building sensitively.

Chair Cllr. Louise Dunne thanked Paul Fusco for an interesting report.

The report was **Noted**.

Item 3: Intro and Irish in South Dublin County Council

Ms Muireann Ni Cheannabhain, introduced her role as newly appointed Irish Language Officer and presented a report titled – ‘[An Ghaeilge in CCÁCT / Irish in SDCC](#)’. As this role hasn’t been occupied for a while, the initial focus is on compliance with the Official Languages Act 2003 & 2021, and services currently in place.

The Council’s Statutory Obligations fall under the following headings; Customer service – the obligation to answer in Irish, placename translations which can be complicated by builders assigning names before estates are taken in charge, Road signs showing both languages, Irish language Advertising targets to be met, recruitment target of 20% staff to be able to provide a service through Irish by 2030 and finally all logos and forms to be bilingual by the end of 2024. As well as ensuring Compliance, the Irish Language Officer provides a point of contact with the Language Commissioner, networks with other Councils and promotes Irish in the Council and County. Gaeilge 365 is an Irish Language innovation programme for Dublin’s local Authorities. Its focus is on growing opportunities to use language in a scalable and replicable manner. It operates around 12 key themes. The Irish Language community includes Clondalkin (special status), Tallaght & Lucan, the Irish Language schools (9 primary & 4 secondary), The GAA clubs, Gaeilge 365 and Irish Language for All. Seachtain na Gaeilge runs for 2 weeks in March where the Irish language is promoted within the Council and County through staff training, staff awareness, Irish language events and live music. Finally, Muireann provided two points of contact – gaeilge@sdublincoco.ie – customer queries for upload on customer care and Membersnet for raising motions specific to Irish language.

Chair Cllr. Louise Dunne thanked Muireann Ni Cheannabhain and invited questions while noting time constraints.

Mr Noel Galvin enquired about the steps that would be necessary for Tallaght to achieve a similar special status like Clondalkin, noting there would be associated tourism benefits. Muireann Ni Cheannabhain said she would investigate the process and revert. Ms Emma Kennedy enquired about how to submit suggestions for areas to develop such as a course by LEO on how to do business as gaeilge, which Ms Yemi Ojo seconded, and Cllr Louise Dunne suggested emailing suggestions to gaeilge@sdublincoco.ie

Cllr. Eoin Ó Broin enquired about the timing of the Irish Language Officer’s involvement in naming new developments, the process for getting Lónraí Gaeilge status for Clondalkin, staffing associated with Gaeilge 365, Irish language courses and whether the SPC could be kept apprised of new proposals. Cllr Louise Dunne (chair) noted that as an official, the Irish Language Officer, is not an SPC member so wouldn’t normally

attend each SPC and that the SPC wouldn't want to put an onerous burden on one official. Paul Fusco noted that Officials can be invited to the SPC or present a report.

Cllr. Dean Donnelly suggested a scavenger hunt type app to encourage the use of the Irish Language in Tallaght and noted difficulties with Irish regional accents in Google translator.

Muireann Ni Cheannabhain replied to questions raised and advised members to email any suggestions for SNaG ahead of the next SPC in February.

The report was **Noted**.

Item 4: Arts Programme Update

As there was insufficient time within the initial timeframe to present the [Arts Programme Update report](#) Chair Cllr. Louise Dunne enquired whether Ms. Maebh Butler would agree to presenting at February's SPC. Ms. Maebh Butler agreed, requested that the report containing County wide information be circulated and noted that Arts updates are presented at each ACM.

The report was **Deferred**

No action items were raised.

Item 5: Any Other Business

As there was insufficient time, no invitation was extended for Any Other Business.

Chair Cllr. Louise Dunne thanked members for their attendance and noted that as per Standing Orders, any suggestions for agenda items should be emailed at least 22 days prior to the next SPC whose next February date will be confirmed by OP+F committee and members advised at least 10 days in advance.

The meeting concluded at 19:00