

# **SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**



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

**MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025 @17:30**

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

### **Attended:**

<b>Members</b>	<b>Sectoral Members</b>
Cllr Louise Dunne (Chair)	Ms Emma Kennedy
Cllr Darragh Adelaide	
Cllr Dean Donnelly	
Cllr. Eoin Ó Broin	
Cllr Sarah Barnes	

**Apologies:** Cllr Glen Moore, Ms Rosaleen Dwyer, Ms Geraldine O Meara, Ms Muireann Ni Cheannabhain, Ms Elaine Vince O'Hara, Mr. Noel Galvin, Ms Yemi Ojo

### **Officials present:**

Ms Lorna Maxwell, Director of Services, EETD  
Ms Sile Coleman, Acting County Librarian  
Ms Sarah McHugh, Senior Executive Librarian  
Ms Orla Scannell, Arts Officer  
Mr Richie O'Sullivan, Assistant Arts Officer  
Mr, Declan Healy, Communications Officer

### **Minute-taker:**

Ms Emma Perry, Executive Librarian

**The meeting was Chaired by Cllr. Louise Dunne.**

Chair Cllr Louise Dunne opened the meeting at 5.30pm and welcomed everyone.

#### **Headed Item 1: Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the Arts Culture Gaeilge Heritage & Libraries SPC meeting held on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sept 2025 were proposed by Cllr Dean Donnelly and seconded by Cllr Louise Dunne (Chair).

Agreed.

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

#### **Headed Item 2: IN CONTEXT 5, Strand 2: SDCC's Public Art programme 2023-26 under the Percent for Art Scheme**

Mr. Richie O'Sullivan presented on IN CONTEXT 5, Strand 2: SDCC's Public Art programme 2023-26 under the Percent for Art Scheme. An update was provided on **In Context 5**, South Dublin County Council's long-term Public Art Programme funded under the national Per Cent for Art Scheme. Members were reminded that the programme is now in its fifth iteration (2023–2026) and includes 27 commissions countywide.

#### **Strand 2 Overview**

- 32 applications were received, with **five commissions selected** across multiple localities.
- Funding allocated per area:
  - St Mark's Ave (Clondalkin) & St Ronan's Crescent (Rowlagh): **€79,000**
  - St Aonghus Green & Old Bawn (Tallaght): **€50,000**
  - Templeogue Village & Pearse Brothers Park (Rathfarnham): **€44,000**
  - Homeville (Knocklyon): **€25,000**
  - Killinarden: **€21,000**

#### **Commissioned Artists & Project Concepts**

- **O'Carroll & Al Jebawi – “The Garden Shed Manifesto”**  
Community engagement through a mobile horse-drawn garden shed, exploring biodiversity and social connection (Spring–Summer 2026).

- **Finan & Drop Table – “Another Infrastructure (AI)”**  
Workshops on ethical and environmental impacts of technology; development of community-run servers and a low-energy web artwork.
- **Watchorn & Mac Giolla Bhríde – “served”**  
Food-based participatory arts project culminating in an immersive tasting event derived from community garden produce.
- **Cleary & Connolly – “Nature Squared”**  
Dodder-based environmental arts project using the scientific quadrat as artistic device; exhibition 2026–27.
- **Von Maltzan – “Rooting Resilience” (continued)**  
Ongoing creative workshops in Killinarden with local community centres and groups.

### **Additional Update**

Members were informed that installation commenced in October 2025 on a new public sculpture at the N81 Glenview Roundabout. The €50,000 commission by Liam O’Callaghan & Mark Clare was selected via two-stage national competition.

Chair Cllr Louise Dunne thanked Mr. Richie O Sullivan for his presentation and remarked that the willow weaves in Killinarden were fantastic.

The report was **Noted**.

### **Headed Item 3: Bronntanas Irish Language Festival in South Dublin**

Mr. Declan Healy presented on Bronntanas, the Irish Language Festival in South Dublin

A report was given on SDCC’s involvement in **Bronntanas**, a multi-agency Irish language family arts festival focused on supporting parents to use Irish at home. The festival is delivered in partnership with DCC, DLR, FCC, Glór na nGael, COGG and others. Bronntanas originated from Gaeilge 365 as staff were asked to come up some suggestions for staff events. Gaeilge 365 was initially an SDCC team which was expanded to include other authorities.

### **SDCC Programme Delivery**

- **14 events** hosted across SDCC Libraries (Tallaght, Clondalkin, North Clondalkin, Castletymon, Lucan, Ballyroan), Áras Chrónáin, Aon Scéal? Café and Tandy’s Lane Park.
- Approx. **171 attendees** at SDCC-delivered events.

- The highlight of the festival was promotional event which asked families to sign up and speak Irish at home. There were over 500 submissions which was unexpected.
- The events in libraries worked very well as the public are used to going to events in libraries. There was an opportunity for walk in to join in as well. Some events were more popular than expected.
- They would also look at anchoring a celebration day at the start and end of the festival in 2026.

#### **Further insights:**

Mr. Healy commented that strategic partnership has been created through libraries for future festival. The core purpose of the festival is to try and create opportunities to speak Irish in a natural setting.

Mr. Healy thanked Ms Muireann Ni Cheannabhain for all her work on the project.

Chair Cllr Louise Dunne asked if the Brontannas team tracked how successful the 21-day challenge was with families.

Mr. Healy replied that they kept in touch with families but did not collate how many completed the challenge. 500 signed up for the challenge and 50% took part.

The chair suggested they look at tracking the amount of families that successfully complete the challenge. The chair also commented on how she would like to speak Irish in a natural setting and that every time she tried to learn Irish, she found it was taught in the same way. The chair commented that outside educational settings people speak it in a natural way.

The chair thanked Mr. Healy for his presentation.

The report was **Noted**.

#### **Headed Item 4: Red Line Book Festival review**

Director of the festival Ms. Sarah McHugh presented a review of the **14th annual Red Line Book Festival**, held 13–19 October 2025. The festival continues to be a flagship cultural event for literature, creativity and community participation in the county.

Red Line Festival review

#### **Key Outcomes**

- Flagship event took place in Rathfarnham Castle where *Bridget Jones* creator **Helen Fielding** spoke to a sold-out audience, interviewed by Tallaght native Vicky Notaro.
- Strong attendance across all age groups.

- **Family Fun Day** in Tallaght Library, Civic Theatre & Parthalán Place attracted **over 2,000 people**.
- Successful **Illustrator in Residence** programme with Celina Buckley, featuring a five-week mentorship.

Ms McHugh commented this year one of the main focusses was on accessibility, inclusion and to reduce financial barriers. There were a number of sensory spaces available during the family fun day. Irish Sign language was also included. Ms. McHugh noted Bridge Interpreters was used and were really good to work with.

Ms McHugh also noted the event management company were responsible for the larger national pieces and author Helen Fielding was also interviewed on Northern Ireland FM. As part of promotion of local writers, a local writer did a conversational piece in NCL which was his first public engagement.

Chair Cllr. Lousie Dunne congratulated Ms McHugh and wished her good luck for next year's festival. The chair noted that Laura Dunne was a brilliant social justice activist.

The report was **noted**.

#### **Headed Item 5: Heritage Plan Update**

Acting County Librarian noted the Heritage Officer was unavailable but would attend the meeting in February to give an update.

The report was **noted**.

#### **Headed Item 6: Arts, Culture, Gaeilge, Heritage and Libraries SPC 2026 Workplan**

No comments

The report was **noted**.

#### **Headed Item 7: Any Other Business**

**The meeting concluded at 6.15pm**