



**Minutes of the Community and Culture Strategic Policy Committee Meeting  
held on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020 at 14:00 p.m.  
Council Chamber, Aras an Chontae, Galway,**

**Members in attendance:**

Cllr. Ivan Canning (Cathaoirleach)	Galway County Council
Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn	Galway County Council
Cllr. Padraig Mac an Iomaire	Galway County Council
Megan Flynn	PPN Representative
Máirtín Davy	PPN Representative
Helena McElmeel	Business Representative

**Staff in attendance:**

Kieran Coyne	A/Senior Executive Officer (Deputising for DOS)
Bernie Kelly	A/County Librarian
Mary McGann	Administrative Officer
Sharon O'Grady	Arts Officer
Bernie O Connor	Assistant Staff Officer

**Apologies:**

Cllr. Liam Carroll	Galway County Council
Cllr. Peter Keaveney	Galway County Council
Cllr. Andrew Reddington	Galway County Council
Mr. Alan Farrell	A/Director of Services

Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Community and Culture SPC (Strategic Policy Committee) on behalf of Cllr. Ivan Canning who had been unavoidably delayed and confirmed that she was deputising as Chairperson pending his arrival (Cllr Canning joined the meeting at 2.30 p.m.)

**1. Minutes of Community and Culture SPC Meeting held on 28 May 2020**

Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn asked if there were any matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting and none were raised. On the proposal of Cllr. Padraic Mac an Iomaire, seconded by Mairtin Davy, the Minutes were agreed and adopted.

**2. Creative Ireland Programme - update**

Sharon O'Grady, Arts Officer, outlined the membership of the Council's cross-departmental Culture Team which included staff members such as the Arts Officer, Heritage Officer, Conservation Officer, County Librarian, Tourism Officer, Archivist and Irish Officer. She explained that the Culture Team

were responsible for devising a collaborative annual Programme of Works from funding of €96,000 per annum under the Creative Ireland Programme, according to the terms of a 3-year Service Level Agreement with Creative Ireland. S. O’Grady confirmed that an additional amount of €15,000 per annum is received for Cruinniú na nOg which is Ireland’s national day of creativity for children and young people. This year, due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, it was predominately online, and while it was very successful, there was no substitute for live participative cultural events. As part of the 2020 Creative Ireland programme, S. O’Grady advised that applications had been invited for Bursary Awards to connect artists and creative practitioners to communities, and in this way, encourage greater access, knowledge and appreciation of the arts, creative industries, heritage and the Irish language. This year 26 applications were received, of which 13 were offered funding, and a further 2 were offered funding directly through the Arts Office. The successful projects created a good geographical spread across the County and a wide range of projects. Examples of these projects were the Heritage projects “Barn Owl” and “Reading the Landscape”, the Conservation project looking at built heritage in Gort, the Tourism and Arts joint project entitled “People, Places and Words” which is essentially photographic images of the County with poetry responding to the images, and the Library project entitled the “Great Read – Ailish Dillon” to commemorate 100 years since her death. She stated that the role of the Arts Office was to co-ordinate the overall programme of events and manage the financial aspects including returns to Creative Ireland.

### 3. Draft Public Art Policy 2020-2024 - consultation

Sharon O’Grady, Arts Officer, outlined the introduction of Public Art into local authority capital programmes from its introduction by the Office of Public Works in 1978, at which time there was no limit on the budgetary proportion to be assigned to public art. In 2004, national guidelines were introduced for a Per Cent for Art Scheme to provide a common national approach towards public art for public bodies delivering capital construction projects. Ms. O’Grady confirmed that public art does not always have to be physical pieces and can work across many art forms such as visual art, dance, film, literature, music, opera and theatre, and can be of any duration, temporary or permanent. Since the early 1990’s, the Council has commissioned over 15 public art projects in the County and commissioned and curated a Visual Art Collection which is on display in our public buildings across the County. Under the 2004 guidelines, the level of funding for public art was a ring-fenced 1% of total capital costs, subject to a maximum of €64,000. Since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2020, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht have retained the budgetary allocation at 1% of total capital costs, but increased the maximum funding limits per project size as follows:

<i>Total Projects Costs:</i>	<i>Maximum Limit per project:</i>
€0 - €5m	€ 50,000
€5m - €20m	€ 125,000
€20m - €50m	€ 350,000
€50m +	€ 500,000

Ms. O’Grady stated that these were significant increases in funding for commissioning new works of public art and it was important for the Council to introduce a Public Art Policy to guide the allocation of these resources, prior to commissioning any further public art under the funding on hand. She then outlined the main elements to be included in the Draft Public Art Policy, which were in accordance with the terms of the national guidelines:

- To establish a Public Art Working Group to implement the Public Art Policy by developing a vision for each project and creating the artists brief and criteria for selection. This Working Group would

be co-ordinated by the Arts Officer and include appropriate technical input as well as Elected Members and 3 professional artists to ensure artistic expertise in the planning and development of all proposals.

- To establish a framework for a Selection Panel drawn from the Public Art Working Group to assess submissions on each individual project, shortlist, and arrange for the appointment of an artist. In accordance with the guidelines, this Panel would include at least 1 professional artist.
- To outline a clear framework for future public art commissions from funding provision through to inviting proposals, public engagement, installation or performance, and maintaining an inventory or database of all commissions.
- A framework to ensure compliance with public procurement and make provision for contractual arrangements including monitoring & payment schedules.
- A framework to provide for the decommissioning, care and conservation of existing public art.

Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn thanked S. O’Grady for the insightful presentation and stated that having a policy and guidelines in place would be excellent and much welcomed and queried the duration of the Public Art Working Group and Ms O Grady replied that it would be in the region of 3-5 years. Mairtin Davy queried the difference between an amateur and a professional artist and Ms O Grady stated that in her opinion a professional artist was someone for whom it was their profession, livelihood and predominately their work, and stated that the Public Art Policy is an excellent opportunity to provide challenging work opportunities for a range of artists . Cllr. Ivan Canning queried if the 3 artists on the Working Group would be advisors on all commissioned projects, as for example, an idea which may be relevant to the residents in Loughrea wouldn’t be relevant to the residents in Oranmore, and it would be vital that someone from area would be able to advise. Ms O Grady clarified that the process of commissioning artists for individual projects would be open and transparent as it would be done by open call and would give opportunities to all local artists to put forward proposals, and in addition, community engagement would be a vital element in the development of individual projects.

#### **4. Age Friendly Strategy – consultation**

Mary McGann, Administrative Officer, stated that the current Age Friendly Strategy was from 2014 – 2019, and the original intention was to carry out a series of public consultation events at venues throughout the County in 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 emergency, it was not possible to proceed on this basis. However, she stated that there was no better time to commence consultation on a new strategy as the Community Call and the Response Helpline had highlighted some issues, such as the need for social supports and IT supports, and in addition, there were links to those who had been cocooning and those who had been caring for them during the lockdown period, which would be the basis for getting real-time information on which to base the new strategy. M. McGann circulated a draft Questionnaire for discussion and confirmed that this Questionnaire is targeted at individuals and will be circulated to a broad range of individuals through all accessible means, in hard and soft copy. The questions were based around the 8 WHO (World Health Organisation) themes on areas which most influence the health and quality of life of older people and will be the framework and starting point for developing a new strategy as follows:

1. *Outdoor Spaces and Buildings* – the level of access to outdoor spaces and buildings can have a major impact on the independence, mobility and quality of life of older people and be the difference between someone participating in community life or being isolated at home.

2. *Transportation* – good public and community transport links enable individuals to access vital services and stay involved in community and social activities.
3. *Housing* – most individuals want to remain living in their own home as long as possible and it is important to have a range of housing options and supports to facilitate this process.
4. *Social Participation* – creating and supporting opportunities for older people to participate in leisure, social and cultural life is strongly connected to improving health and wellbeing, and conversely, loneliness and social isolation increases the risk of depression, mental health difficulties and cognitive decline.
5. *Respect and Social Inclusion* – a forum needs to be in place to allow older people to participate in local democracy, and public, private and community services need to be delivered in a manner which is respectful and supportive.
6. *Civic Participation and Employment* – older people do not stop contributing to society upon retirement and need to be facilitated to continue contributing through paid or voluntary work opportunities or lifelong learning opportunities in their communities.
7. *Communication and Information* – as more information moves online, it is vital to ensure that older people remain connected by ensuring information is available through a variety of means at local level.
8. *Community Supports and Health Services* – to enable older people to remain healthy and independent, a range of community and health supports are necessary, including preventative screening, advice on healthy eating, and home support services.

M McGann confirmed that following receipt and collation of the questionnaire responses, further consultations will take place with the SPC, Age Friendly Alliance, LCDDC, PPN and other structures, prior to drafting the priority actions for County Galway over the 5-year term of the new strategy.

Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn commended the great work that is being done and thanked Ms McGann for the very informative presentation. She noted that there was a momentous amount of work in all presentations and thanked both Ms. McGann and Ms. O Grady for this and said that she was grateful that we were doing something for accessibility in the County. Cllr. Ivan Canning said that the strategy covered a huge amount of people, he noted that there is a huge amount of disability in all areas and stated that it was vital we get feedback from people on the ground, as they can see what we are not seeing every day. In response to a query from Cllr. Canning, M. McGann stated that a Walkability Audit was being carried out in Milltown under a Healthy Ireland project and it was hoped it would provide a template for use in other areas going forward. Helena McElmeel stated that it was important that other opportunities would not be missed to improve accessibility of the public realm, for example, by providing outside seating areas, re-purposing a parking space for community use, etc. Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn agreed that this was an important point made by Ms. McElmeel and it was crucial that key areas were not missed.

The Members agreed that it was vital that outdoor spaces and public realms be accessible, safe and age-friendly and that this should be reflected in the County Development Plan – M. McGann confirmed that such a submission would be made by her as Age Friendly Programme Manager.

## 5. Any Other Business

Mairtin Davy stated that he has an issue with signage in Connemara, specifically that it is only in Irish, which he stated is to the detriment of people who are not from the area or have moved to or intend to move to the area. He proposed that this is an area Public Representatives should look into with a view to making representations to the Minister. In relation to whether facilities in Connemara should be available only to Irish-speakers, Cllr. Canning stated that community facilities should normally be available to all in the locality and this matter should be raised further with local elected representatives.

In response to a query from Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn, B. Kelly, A/County Librarian stated that libraries were being re-opened on a phased basis, and a lot of work has gone into making them safe places for both staff and customers.

In response to a query from Cllr. Shelly Herterich Quinn regarding the placement of the Galway 2020 spheres at roundabouts, S. O'Grady, Arts Officer, confirmed that the Council had received the spheres used in the 6 County towns which participated in the Fire Tour leading up to Galway 2020, and advised that plans would be put in place for each town to receive their sphere subject to planning and regulatory requirements regarding its placement.

The meeting then concluded.