

**Minutes of Meeting of Planning & Development, Heritage, Community, Arts & Culture Strategic Policy Committee (SPC3) held on 27<sup>th</sup> January, 2016 at 3.00 pm in Meeting Room 1, County Hall**

**Chairman:** Cllr. John Brennan

**In Attendance:** Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Cllr. D. Kennedy, John Hurley, Mary Brennan, John Burke, M. Melia, DOS, A. M. Walsh, SEO, Jane O'Reilly, Planner, Mary Butler, Arts Officer, D. Malone, Senior Planner, N Louw, Senior Executive Officer, Ronan Ryan, Community Liaison Officer, D.O'Reilly, Acting County Librarian, D. Ledwidge, Heritage Officer, E. Graham, Project Liaison Architect for St. Mary's, Breda Strappe, ASO.

Apologies:

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**Item 1 – Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 25<sup>th</sup> November, 2015 were proposed by Cllr. Kennedy, seconded by John Burke and agreed.

**Item 2 – Callan Local Area Plan**

Jane O'Reilly, Planner gave a powerpoint presentation on the proposed amendment to the Callan Local Area Plan, updating the group on its current status. A discussion followed with contributions being made by Cllr. Kennedy.

**Item 3 – Three Sisters ECOC Bid 2020**

Mick D'Arcy, Bid Team Leader gave a presentation to the group on the body of work done to date and the upcoming plans for the Three Sisters 2020, Kilkenny-Waterford-Wexford European Capital of Culture bid. This is the first real example of three local authorities working closely together on such a major project. The Three Sisters, together with the other 2 remaining candidates, Galway and Limerick ECOC Bid 2020 have now commenced Phase 2 of the process. The presentation of Phase 2 bid will be made in July in Dublin Castle. Should the bid be successful, it will have an enormous impact on the socio-economic development of the area. A discussion ensued with contributions made by Cllr. Brennan, J. Hurley, M.Brennan, M. Melia.

**Item 4 – National Cultural Policy – Culture 2025**

Dearbhala Ledwidge gave a presentation to the group on Culture 2025 (draft National Cultural Policy), outlining the background behind it and its objectives and aims. She informed the group that Kilkenny County Council had already made its submissions on this policy document and that it is hoped that these submissions will have an input in the final document as there is evidence based data that Culture is of utmost importance to the quality of life, creation of jobs, tourism health and wellbeing, identity, community and engagement. It is expected that the final policy document will be issued by the Department of Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht during 2016.

Maria Melia advised the group that Kilkenny County Council has set up a Cultural Services Section in Kilkenny Local Authorities, encompassing Arts, Heritage, Libraries, Architectural Conservation, Architectural Design and Tourism.

This proposal was welcomed by Cllr. J. Brennan and seconded by Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick.

### **Item 5 – Audit of Memorials & Signs in Co. Kilkenny**

Peter Cox and John Beatty of Carrig Conservation gave a presentation on the audit of Memorials and Plaques in the County that they were commissioned to carry out by The Heritage Office of Kilkenny County Council with co-funding from the Heritage Council. This survey was carried out in 2015 and identified over 300 monuments and plaques around the County. As a result of this survey, Kilkenny County Council has now a database and map listing all the memorials, signs and plaques identified.

Cllr. J. Brennan thanked Peter Cox and John Beatty for the excellent presentation and quality of work and research done on the audit. Cllr. Fitzpatrick proposed that Carrig Conservation should be invited to give this presentation to the full council, which was seconded by Cllr. D. Kennedy.

### **Item 6 – Libraries**

Maria Melia advised the group of the Minister's recent announcement of an allocation of €2.45 million for the new library and confirmed that Josephine Coyne, County Librarian, would be coming back after her secondment to Carlow County Council and would be spearheading this capital project. Maria Melia also thanked Dorothy O'Reilly for all her work over the past number of years.

Dorothy O'Reilly advised the members of the library services recently introduced, some of which include free membership, e-books, on line courses etc. A discussion followed with contributions being made by Cllr. P. Fitzpatrick, Cllr. J. Brennan, Cllr. D. Kennedy.

### **Any other Business**

- a. Cllr. J. Brennan referred to the minutes of the previous meeting in regard to the site visit to St. Mary's Church, commending all involved on the quality of work undertaken to date and reiterated the significance of this project to Kilkenny.
- b. M. Brennan expressed her concern in regard to dredging being used as a solution to reduce flooding. M. Brennan was advised that she should address this issue to the Environment Section.
- c. J. Hurley raised a question in relation to the potential locations being considered by Kilkenny County Council for the housing of refugees. M. Melia advised that to date, there is no update on this and that this matter should be addressed to the Housing Section.
- d. It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> April, at 3.00 pm.