

Minutes of SPC 5 Meeting held on Thursday 15th of July, 2021 via Microsoft Teams

In attendance: Cllr. Pat Dunphy (Chair), Cllr. John Brennan, Cllr. Martin Brett, Cllr. Tomas Breathnach, Michael Rice IFA, Denis Brophy PPN, Mary Mulholland, Cora Nolan, John Collins, Mary Butler and Dearbhala Ledwidge Kilkenny County Council.

Apologies: Josephine Coyne, Fergal Canton and Murty Brennan.

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. John Brennan, Seconded by Cllr. Martin Brett.

(a) Matters Arising

None.

2. Presentation on the KTCM CDP Pilot Programme Award to Kilkenny.

Lindsey Butler outlined the background to this award and the process involved. The aim of the 2021 Community Development Pilot Programme is to trial community development initiatives that address poverty, social exclusion and inequality, and promote human rights.

The call invited expressions of interest from community development organisations working to address issues in areas such as racism (including Travellers and Roma), domestic or sexual violence, migration, gender, people living in direct provision or seeking international protection, climate action and just transition.

Seven projects out of 123 submissions were selected to be part of the pilot which has overall funding of €1 million for 2021. The KTCM applied under the scheme in partnership with CKLP and KCC Community Section

The scheme will be administered locally through the LCDC - which will have an oversight established for the monitoring of that programme will be expanded to take on the role of the CDP Pilot programme. The KTCM sought €140,000 per annum over a 3-year period - this funding will enable the KTCM to employ a Coordinator, a Traveller Community Development Worker, and an Administrator as well as to establish a base or office.

Mary asked that this item be brought to the attention of the SPC members to recognise the achievement of the people who put this application together especially Lindsey Butler and Helena Power and the vote of confidence in Kilkenny KTCM. The County Council will also have a role in supporting this programme and this will need to be considered at budget time.

Cora will send information sheet on this programme to all committee members.

As Chair Pat Dunphy thanked Lindsey and congratulated all involved in putting this application together.

3. Heritage Programme Update

Dearbhala Ledwidge Heritage Officer gave an update on the following: -

Kilkenny Biodiversity Programme: - The Kilkenny Swift Audit- Birdwatch Ireland, in partnership with the Heritage Office of Kilkenny County Council, are coordinating the first county wide Swift survey in Kilkenny to see how many Swifts there are, and where they are nesting in Kilkenny's towns and villages. The Barn Owl's are also under threat and an audit is currently taking place with a county wide survey with a final report to be finalised in November.

Kilkenny Wetlands Audit Phase 2 - A survey of 30 wetland sites will be carried out (lakes, ponds, marsh etc), this is co-funded by the Heritage Council under County Heritage Plan Programme. In 2020 phase 1 was completed with 252 sites mapped, 15 surveyed, 17% designated sites, 83% countryside.

Kilkenny County Council Pollinator Programme - Gardening for Biodiversity Workshops. 10 free workshops were held from March-May these workshops were very successful.

Heritage week taking place on line from the 14th-22nd of August, this is an opportunity for communities to showcase their work and encourage communities to upload projects.

A number of queries were raised and Cllr. Pat Dunphy thanked Dearbhala for her presentation.

John Brennan requested more PR on the lead up to Heritage week including local parish newsletters, for more groups to interact

4. Fire services Update

John Collins gave an update from the Fire Station.

Capital Projects

Tender for a new emergency tender vehicle on the 30/ 6/21 and closing date is 30/7/21. The new Emergency Tender vehicle will have the capacity to carry rescue equipment for all types of emergencies including Road Traffic

Collisions, chemical incidents and Heavy Goods Vehicle Rescue to greatly enhance Kilkenny Fire and Rescue response to such incidents.

The new vehicle will replace existing Emergency Tender which is over 19 years old and is expected to be on the run for Q1 2022.

In talks with auctioneers on possible sites for a new fire station for Kilkenny City Fire station.

The tender documents for the new fire station for Urlingford fire station are near completion and will be going to tender in the next week or so.

Fire Safety Certificates

- 59 no applications for fire safety certificates were received to 15TH July 2021. 69 no were received for the same period last year. These applications were administered and assessed by staff working from home and from Headquarter station due to Covid-19.

Fire Services Acts 1981 and 2003

- Fire Prevention staff made targeted inspections of premises both to provide advice and to enforce legislation.
- 10no. Licence Applications were processed under Section 24 of the Fire Services Acts 1981 & 2003.
- 37no. Fire safety inspections of premises have been carried out to date during level 5 -Covid-19.

Community Fire Safety

- Talks and information to various communities is on hold due to current Public Health restrictions.
- We are carrying out Home fire safety visits at present to the vulnerable people with COVID-19 precautions in place. In the Home fire safety visit we engage with them on fire safety advice and install smoke detectors where required.

Training

Kilkenny Fire and Rescue Service recently complete Pre- Hospital Emergency Care Council (PHECC) accredited Emergency First Responder Refresher training for members of the Fire Service. This course was run by our own in-house qualified instructors.

Compartment fire behaviour training was run in June for personnel. If any committee member interested to contact John.

Operations

- Fire Brigades responded to 347no turnouts up to the 5th July 2021. The same period last year we responded to 427no turnouts.
- We have referred 2 possible malicious false alarms to An Garda Siochána. The cost of malicious calls in 2020 was €2,373
- The recruitment of fire fighters for Freshford and Castlecomer fire brigades has commenced. We had 6no applicants for Freshford Fire Brigade and 3no applicants for Castlecomer Fire brigade which was disappointing. John asked if all committee members could spread the word on recruitment in the various fire stations. This is a national issue and a working group has been set up.

Pat thanked John for his update and John will email times of training events to Pat if he wishes to attend.

5. Arts Update – Mary Butler

Mary gave a presentation and updated on the following: -

Professional Development & Artists Supports and feedback from participants which was very positive.

- Wednesday weeklies online, Digital media workshops online, Awards and Bursaries, Poetry Broadsheet, Literature workshops online, Writers mentoring opportunities online.
- Emerging Curator in Residence – Enabling an emerging curator to gain direct experience in the field of curating exhibitions for and with the Arts Office.
- Knitted Together 2 projects were launched and it a lovely way to bring communities together by taking part in an activity that gives back to local charities with over 180 participants taking part with huge media interest including local and national papers.
- Bookville partnership between the Arts Office and Library Service, this is a festival for families and children aged between 0-12 years in 2021 a new Bookville Activity book is being created and 12,000 will be produced with online events also.
- Rhyme Rag – online poetry journal for young writers, continue to select, illustrate and publish the work of young writers, complemented by a bursary to schools for writing workshops, involved 10 schools/average of 300 students, will administer another school’s bursary in the autumn.

- Regional and National Collaborations

Youth Arts Network- Partnership with the Councils of Waterford, Wexford and Carlow and other regional and national partners. Lead Authority Waterford County Council.

Partnership with Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Dublin, Wexford and Waterford. Jointly promote and facilitate a year-long artists development Project

Platform 31-Partnership with thirty other local authorities and the Arts Council of Ireland

A nationwide artist development scheme designed to support and offer career development for 31 mid-career artists. Support is both financial and developmental.

Pat thanked Mary for her comprehensive presentation and illustrating the number of people who have taken part in workshops and online events, he also acknowledged the impact Covid has had on the Art sector.

A number of observations/queries were raised

Cllr. T. Breathnach asked if more of a connection could be made with the Irish language.

Mary Butler advised working with Irish language poet, but might need to be more work done across departments.

Villages and streetscapes changing could a record be kept of same?

An audit took place on traditional shop fronts in Kilkenny, could be referred to forward planning department, local community groups and forward planning could work on this together.

Stone walls in the Countryside collapsing, this is a huge part of Heritage and how to protect these structures.

Dearbhala responded that stones walls are very important part of Heritage and would support an initiative but at the moment there is no grant scheme available, could this be considered in the budget.

Cllr. T. Breathnach advised that he will draft and forward a motion to the Council and write to the Department.

Date for Next Meeting is Wednesday 22nd of September at 3.00p.m.

