

## LOUTH COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Community, Quality of Life & Creativity Strategic Policy Committee meeting held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October, 2020 via Zoom.

**Present:** Cllr. Emma Coffey, Chair  
Cllr. Michelle Hall  
Cllr. Pearse McGeough  
Cllr. John Sheridan  
Ms. Fiona Crawley, PPN Environmental Rep.  
Mr. Colin Roche, PPN Social Inclusion Rep.  
Ms. Gráinne Berrill, PPN Sports Rep.  
Ms. Stacey McVeigh, PPN Youth Rep.  
Ms. Susan Farrelly, PPN Arts Rep.

**Officials:** Mr. Paddy Donnelly, Director of Services  
Mr. John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer  
Ms. Yvonne O'Brien, County Librarian  
Ms. Amanda Branigan, Senior Executive Librarian  
Ms. Linda Larrigan, Senior Executive Librarian  
Mr. Barry Eaton, Senior Staff Officer

**Apologies:** Cllr. Paddy McQuillan  
Cllr. Maeve Yore  
Ms. Paula Gribben

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### Introduction

Cllr. Michelle Hall initially took on the role of Chair, as Cllr. Emma Coffey was unavailable for the early stages of the meeting. Cllr. Hall welcomed everyone to the meeting.

### Minutes of the previous meeting

Cllr. John Sheridan proposed the minutes of the previous meeting which were held on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2020 and Cllr. Pearse McGeough seconded.

### Matters Arising

No matters were raised.

### Draft Policy on Works by Community Groups

Mr. John Lawrence, Senior Executive Officer, outlined the purpose of the policy and informed that the comments and suggestions made at the last meeting had been considered. He also explained the process that is required for the policy to be adopted by the Council. The next steps include forwarding of the draft policy to other Directorates and SMT in the Council, for consideration

Members discussed the Draft Policy and a number of comments and suggestions were made:

- A discussion took place on the value of employing external consultants when undertaking projects.
- It was also confirmed that the cost of consultants can be included when making applications for funding.
- It was emphasised that the draft policy would protect community groups when issues of liability arise and an example of a Tidy Towns group constructing a footpath was given.
- It was clarified that Louth County Council will have ten days to inspect works following notification of completion (subject to agreement).
- A request was made for the policy to include more graphics.
- A discussion took place on the defect period following completion of projects, though it was noted that this was outside the scope of the Draft Policy.

### **The Library Development Plan**

A comprehensive presentation was given to members on the Library Development Plan. The presentation was made by Ms. Yvonne O'Brien, Ms. Amanda Branigan and Ms. Linda Larrigan.

Members discussed the plan and a number of comments and suggestions were made:

- A query was made regarding the possible reduction in staff numbers due to the introduction of the open library arrangements. It was confirmed that staff numbers have increased and that there is a requirement for additional staff.
- It was suggested that more events could be organised in the library that target young males.
- Details of the level of engagement with the nursing homes in Louth were provided.
- A suggestion was made to record the lives of older people during the Covid pandemic.
- It was confirmed that funding has been received for an outdoor garden which is planned for Dundalk library.
- It was also confirmed that there will be a link in with the European Library Agenda.
- A discussion took place on the merits of providing dedicated study rooms in the libraries.
- A suggestion was made that it would be beneficial to consult with community groups as part of the Development Plan process.
- The positive work being undertaken by the library staff in Louth was complimented by a number of members.

### **A.O.B.**

A comprehensive update on the Community Call Helpline was provided by Mr. Paddy Donnelly who also gave assurances that the service continues to run during the Level 5 restrictions.

**Next Meeting**

Cllr. Emma Coffey advised that the next meeting of the SPC will take place via Zoom with a date to be confirmed within the next week.

**That concluded the business of the meeting.**

Minutes confirmed at SPC Meeting held on: 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Signed by Chairperson: 

