

MEETING OF DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

6 JULY 2020

**CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT FROM THE COMMUNITY, CULTURE AND WELLBEING
STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the Community, Culture and Wellbeing Strategic Policy Committee
held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 17 June 2020 at 5.00pm**

Chairperson's Report

Councillors Present

Ahmed, Kazi	Grainger, Anna
Baker, Marie (Chair)	Hanafin, Mary
O' Brien, Peter	McLoughlin, Sean
Donnelly, Deirdre	Moylan, Justin
Dunne, Daniel	

SECTORIAL REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Dr. Josephine Browne, Sheila Grace, Brian Kavanagh and Pierrott Ngadai

OFFICIALS PRESENT

Therese Langan, Director of Community and Cultural Development; Mary Ruane, Senior Executive Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Catherine Gallagher, County Librarian; Ian Smalley, Administrative Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Michelle Carroll, Senior Community Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Sandra Kelly, Area Community Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Siobhán Nic Gaoithín, Senior Staff Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Barbara Henry, Assistant Staff Officer (Acting), Community and Cultural Development; Rachel Sherratt, Clerical Officer, Community and Cultural Development.

Announcement

Cllr. Marie Baker (Chair) advised all participants that the meeting would be recorded for the purposes of minutes and the recording would be deleted, thereafter. She invited anyone with objections to this to inform her. No participant objected to the meeting being recorded for the purpose outlined and at this point recording of the meeting began.

Cllr. Baker proceeded to run through the remote meeting guidelines that were distributed to participants prior to the meeting.

Welcome & Introductions

Cllr. Baker welcomed all participants to the meeting.

Confirmation of Minutes from SPC Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 20th March 2019 were agreed. The minutes were then adopted, having been proposed by Cllr. Deirdre Donnelly and seconded by Cllr. Anna Grainger.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

None.

Information items submitted by members for written reply

No business.

Director's Business

a) DLR Community Response to Covid-19 Public Health Crisis (Therese Langan)

Therese Langan, Director of Community & Cultural Development, gave a presentation on the DLR Community Response to Covid-19 Public Health crisis, which included the background and dynamics involved in setting up and running the Community Response Helpline, which was established within 48 hours of the country entering lockdown.

Ms. Langan highlighted the supports that were offered to older and vulnerable people through the helpline and referral mechanism and the stakeholders, organisations and volunteers involved. From the 30th March – 14th June 2020, 3404 calls were received by the helpline with the biggest spike in calls received following the distribution of the Help Line promotional leaflet to every home in DLR. A breakdown of calls and location map was presented and Ms Langan informed the meeting that the help line was still in operation and that calls had now reduced dramatically. An outline of the Covid 19 Emergency Fund being administered by the Community & Cultural Development Department was presented as well as details of the food bank, wellbeing and mental health initiatives developed and delivered during the Covid-19 crisis.

Cllr. Baker opened the floor for questions and answers following on from Ms. Langan's presentation. Following discussion, it was agreed to keep the impact of the Covid Crisis on the SPC agenda for further follow-up.

Therese Langan, Director of Community & Cultural Development acknowledged that work was required in these areas. She advised that a full review of the community call initiative would be undertaken and its progress would be brought to future SPC's.

b) Community Development & Social Inclusion Overview (Mary Ruane)

Mary Ruane, Senior Executive Officer of Community & Cultural Development gave an overview of the Community Development & Social Inclusion unit. She highlighted the wide range of supports, programmes and services in place in the county (listed below), helping to build a sense of wellbeing and improve quality of life in our local communities:

- 30+ Community Centres
- Leisure Centres
- Community Grants
- Age Friendly Alliance & Age Friendly Strategy
- DLR Children & Young Persons Committee & Plan
- Healthy DLR Network and Programme
- DLR Public Participation Network
- DLR Comhairle na nÓg
- DLR Volunteer Centre & Corps
- Social Inclusion events and activities

Cllr. Baker opened the floor for questions and answers following on from Ms. Ruane's presentation and following responses from Mary Ruane and Therese Langan, the presentation was noted.

c) Libraries Overview (Catherine Gallagher)

Catherine Gallagher, County Librarian gave a presentation and overview of DLR Library Services provided in 8 branch libraries, open 382 hours per week - one of the most extensive access to public library premises in Ireland. DLR libraries had over 1.1 million visitors in 2019 with over 540,000 to the LexIcon Library & Cultural Centre and over 1.1 million items were physically borrowed during the year. An overview of the various events for all ages taking place in the Library branches was presented, including national initiatives and festivals. The Covid 19 response provided by the Library Service included supporting the Community Call service; delivering books and care packages to over 740 elderly and cocooning homes; online events, increased online usage and the repurpose of 3-d printers for PPE gear.

There were no questions for Ms. Gallagher following her presentation, only praise and thanks for the book delivery service provided during the Covid health crisis.

d) DLR Children and Young Persons Plan 2020-2023 (Sandra Kelly)

Sandra Kelly, Area Community Officer, Community & Cultural Development, gave a presentation on the DLR Children and Young Persons Plan 2020-2023 followed by a Q&A.

Cllr. Marie Baker noted that the Children & Young Person's Plan had been presented at the last SPC meeting in March 2019 but that it had not progressed to Council and that this SPC could bring it to the next Council meeting. Ms. Kelly responded to questions from Councillors and SPC members regarding engagement and consultation and Therese Langan informed the meeting that a very comprehensive communications campaign took place to engage young people in developing the plan and that questionnaires were sent out to all schools in the County.

Cllr. Anna Grainger proposed the plan and it was seconded by Cllr. O'Brien and Cllr. McLoughlin.

Business Referred from the Council (if any)

None.

Business Referred from the Corporate Policy Group (if any)

None.

Items for SPC Future Works Programme

(8a) Strategic policy issue relevant to the business of the SPC for consideration by the committee for inclusion in the Future Work Programme - Submitted by Sheila Grace, Shankill Day Care Centre:

"The necessary closure of Day Care Centres during the pandemic has left many who would have availed of day care services isolated in their own homes and has contributed to the greatly increased demand for Meals on Wheels. Many of those who would have volunteered in delivering this service are in the healthy over 70s age group. They are now cocooning and, also at risk of isolation. Overnight, the issue of ageing communities has become one in need of urgent consideration. Overcoming the isolation experienced by older people will not be easily achieved given that an estimated 50% of the population between 65 and 74 have never used the internet. Though no replacement for human contact, access to the internet is vital for older people in order to remain connected to the greater community.

What steps can be taken to respond to the growing need there is to ensure older people living alone in the community can access the internet? How can they be supported in doing this and what kinds of social interaction can they be offered?"

Cllr. Baker invited Ms. Sheila Grace to speak about Item 8(a) that she has added to the agenda. Cllr. Baker confirmed that she was happy to have it included on the Future Works Programme following questions and discussions by the committee members.

Therese Langan, Director of Community & Cultural Development spoke of the many issues that the Covid health crisis had highlighted for cocooning older people and that much work was required, especially if a second wave of the virus were to take place. She informed the meeting of the work underway by Southside Partnership who run programmes for older people to support their IT skills; reviewing the DLR Age Friendly Strategy to include measures to support older people with accessing the internet, as well as Library and Arts initiatives. Ms. Langan noted that she would contact SMART Dublin to see the interest in rolling out a programme around this area and that she would come back to the group.

It was agreed with the Chair, Cllr. Baker that this item would stay on the agenda going forward.

Draft Future Work Programme:

- Public Art Programme Updates
- Autism Awareness
- Cultural Programme Updates
- Universal Grants
- Community Development and Social Inclusion Updates
- Cultural and Creative Plan Development and Updates
- DLR's Children and Young Person's Plan

- Healthy Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Updates
- Library Development Plan Updates
- Age Friendly Strategy Implementation and initiatives updates

The Draft Work Programme was agreed and Cllr. Baker (Chair) requested that if any members have further submissions to include on the Future Works programme, that they email them to Community Section administration staff.

Any other Business:

None

Date of Next Meeting:

The Chair, Cllr. Baker thanked all members for their participation in the meeting.

Wednesday 9th September 2020, 5pm confirmed as date of next meeting with the meeting platform to be confirmed.