

MONTHLY MEETING OF DÚN LAOGHAIRE-RATHDOWN COUNTY COUNCIL

12 April 2021

Chairperson's Report from Community, Culture & Wellbeing SPC 20th January 2021

Chairpersons Report of the Community, Culture and Wellbeing Strategic Policy Committee

held via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday 20th January 2021 at 5.00 pm

Councillors Present

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

SECTORIAL REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT

Dr Josephine Browne, Olivia Dunne, Sheila Grace, Brian Kavanagh, Lyn Hagin Meade and Pierrott Ngadai

OFFICIALS PRESENT

Therese Langan, Director of Community & Cultural Development; Mary Ruane, Senior Executive Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Catherine Gallagher, DLR County Librarian; Louise Kinlen, Researcher, Southside Partnership; Ian Smalley, Administrative Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Ruairí Ó Dúlaing, Senior Parks Superintendent, DLR County Council; Aidan Ffrench, Executive Parks Superintendent, DLR County Council; Anne Murray, Biodiversity Officer, DLR County Council; Siobhán Nic Gaoithín, Senior Staff Officer, Community and Cultural Development; Barbara Henry, Clerical Officer, Community and Cultural Development; and Paul O'Dwyer, Assistant Staff 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 and recording of the meeting began.

Cllr Baker also welcomed Cllr Oisín O'Connor, who has replaced Deirdre Ní Fhloinn on the committee.

Confirmation of Minutes from SPC Meeting

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 14th October 2020 were agreed. The minutes were then adopted, having been proposed by Cllr Peter O'Brien and seconded by Dr Josephine Browne.

Matters Arising from the Minutes: None.

Information items submitted by members for written reply: No business.

Director's Business

(a) Community & Cultural Development Department – COVID-19 Response & Health & Wellbeing update

Therese Langan, Director of Community & Cultural Development gave an update on the DLR Community Call as part of the Community Response to the COVID-19 Public Health crisis. The Community Call has been promoted again following the latest restrictions, with emphasis on providing older and vulnerable people with advice on grocery delivery/collection services, the book drop service and assisting in potential social isolation. Calls have been averaging at 15 a day and the Community Response continues to include the Family Support and Health and Wellbeing working groups. A key challenge is getting the message out about the Community Call and An Cathaoirleach Una Power is assisting in its promotion.

Mary Ruane, Senior Executive Officer and Catherine Gallagher, County Librarian provided an update about the Health & Wellbeing Group – the interagency and interdepartmental group that meets fortnightly to identify areas of need; to support communities during these difficult circumstances and to promote and roll out the national Keep Well campaign at a local level during Quarter 1 2021.

Health and Wellbeing supports available as part of the Covid 19 response and the Keep Well Campaign include:

- Essential services provided in Community Centres, such as childcare & youth services;
- Continuation and development of arts and library events programmes (all within permitted guidelines) ie: Mobile Music Programme, Cuairt agus Cultúr etc.
- Delivery of the Healthy Ireland Programme – mental health support groups, Southside Partnership Social Prescribing project; wellness activity programmes for older people etc.
- Age Friendly Programme - Age Friendly Activity Magazines, Winter 2020 being distributed around the county
- DLR Leisure Centres, providing programmes for all ages and fitness levels
- Community Resilience Fund – funding of €107,560 from Sláintecare, Healthy Ireland and Creative Ireland to support the Keep Well Campaign activities which has been promoted in line with the national campaign
- COVID-19 Emergency Grants: Round 1 Funding of €83.6K grants in 2020 for emergency support for food parcels, PPE etc. and a further €52K has been made available for Round 2 applications - open until 12th February 2021.

Cllr. Baker opened the floor for questions and suggestions and the Health & Wellbeing group were thanked for all the work put into the initiative.

(b) Review of Community Call – COVID-19 Response 2020

Louise Kinlen, Researcher, Southside Partnership presented on the evaluation that she has carried out on the DLR Community Response from March-October 2020, with the main headings being:

- 1. Assessing the key outputs and outcomes**
- 2. Reviewing processes and structures**
- 3. Identifying challenges (and how they were addressed)**
- 4. Summary and key findings**

Ms Kinlen noted the qualitative and quantitative methods used as part of the evaluation in the form of surveys and interviews. The DLR County Council data that was captured, recorded and made available on call types, numbers and location for the purposes of the report was extremely helpful.

Ms Kinlen reported that very strong interagency collaboration and structures were established in a very short time frame in response to the emergency and DLR had the fourth highest call rate in the country from March – August 2020. Over time, the needs of callers developed from practical needs (e.g. shopping delivery) into more social isolation/mental health support. The overall summary demonstrated that the effectiveness of the response was high.

One of the limitations of the review was that citizens who availed of the Community Call service were not engaged with. However, the analysis of the report's findings still provide a useful insight. Various challenges associated with the Community Call were also presented along with key learnings and recommendations.

Cllr. Baker opened the floor for questions and suggestions, Ms Kinlen was thanked for her work on the report and presentation and for providing clarity to questions from the SPC members.

(c) DLR Trees & Urban Forestry Strategy 2021-2031

Aidan Ffrench, Executive Parks Superintendent, DLR County Council provided a presentation on the upcoming new strategy. It was highlighted that DLR were the first Local Authority in Ireland to publish such a strategy in 2011 and headings covered were:

- **Why trees?** Examples of well being, social and environmental benefits and use of trees in the community
- **What do we have?** Mapping of the tree coverage across the DLR
- **How are we doing?** Examples provided of the work being carried out by DLR County Council
- **How to get to a new strategy?** Similar priorities from other strategies in place outside Ireland were provided as well as objectives and goals for DLR to get a strategy in place.

Mr Ffrench noted that the strategy is currently at consultation stage with public consultation taking place on the DLR Citizen Space platform until the 31st January. He noted that a stakeholder engagement exercise is being considered and it is hoped that the new strategy will be adapted by the end of 2021.

Cllr. Baker opened the floor for questions and suggestions to Mr Ffrench and Ruairí Ó Dúlaing, Senior Parks Superintendent and they were thanked for their work on the strategy.

(d) DLR Action Plan for Invasive Species

Anne Murray, Biodiversity Officer, DLR County Council presented on the reasons why DLR require an invasive species action plan; the types of invasive species currently in the county; their impact on our nature, social settings, ecosystems and economy as well as the actions taking place in DLR to deal with these species.

This Action Plan feeds into and is impacted by other plans, such as: DLR County Biodiversity Plan, DLR Climate Action Plan, the County Development Plan as well as Irish and EU legislation. The overall aim of the DLR Invasive Species Action Plan is to "provide a roadmap for invasive species to be eradicated from the county where possible or controlled when eradication is not possible."

The Action Plan also notes the priorities for native species; prevention of invasive species spreading; training requirements and raising awareness and engaging with the public in implementing the plan.

Cllr. Baker opened the floor for questions and suggestions and Ms Murray was thanked for her presentation.

Business Referred from the Council (if any) - None.

Business Referred from the Corporate Policy Group (if any) - None.

Items for SPC Future Works Programme

Strategic policy issue relevant to the business of the SPC for consideration by the committee for inclusion in the Future Work Programme

Cllr Baker noted the items on the SPC Future Works Programme. Revision of the item titled 'Assisting Older People to Access Technology' will be changed to 'Digital Literacy & Digital Poverty'.

Any Other Business:

Cllr O'Brien suggested that the term 'right sizing' of housing, used in the Age Friendly Strategy Questionnaire should be reworded, based on feedback from the public.

Date of Next Meeting:

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

Tuesday 16th March 2020 at 5p.m was confirmed as date of next meeting