

Minutes of Strategic Policy Committee 5-Community, Cultural and Fire Services held on Wednesday 4th December, 2019 at 3pm in The Chamber, County Hall.

Present: Cllr. John Brennan (Chairperson), Mary Mulholland (Director of Services), Cllr. Thomas Breathnach, Cllr. Martin Brett, Cllr. John Coonan, Cllr. Pat Dunphy, Michael Rice, Martin Brennan, Denis Brophy, Fergal Canton.

In attendance: John Collins, (Fire Services), Josephine Coyne (Library Services), Mary Butler (Arts Officer), Dearbhala Ledwidge (Heritage Officer).

Apologies: Cllr. P. Cleere

1. Introduction

Mary Mulholland welcomed all present and noted that the Policy document outlining the Strategic Policy Committee Scheme (SPC) and its remit had been circulated previously.

1.1 Election of Chairperson

Cllr. John Brennan was proposed as Chairperson.

Proposed: Cllr. Thomas Breathnach

Seconded: Cllr. John Coonan

1.2 Welcome by the Chairperson

Cllr. Brennan welcomed all attendees to SPC 5. He looks forward to a productive term and engagement from the members of the SPC.

2. Overview of SPC Scheme

Mary Mulholland (Director of Services), gave an overview of the Scheme in particular noting Section 4 (Terms of Reference) and number of meetings per year (minimum of 4). Meetings to take place in the Chamber, County Hall. External members were asked to become familiar with the services areas covered under SPC 5. The purpose of the SPC is to bring forward policy proposed to be actioned by the full council.

Declarations regarding Ethics and Conflict of Interest to be issued to members by post in January 2020. Any questions regarding same should be directed to Anne Marie Walsh (Corporate Services).

Should joint meetings with other SPC's be required or beneficial to generating policy they will be facilitated. The SPC members have an opportunity to discuss and influence policy going forward.

It was noted that members have a responsibility to inform the Council if they cannot attend a meeting and should two meetings in a row be missed without notification the nominating body will be notified.

3. Fire Services Presentation:

John Collins (Chief Fire Officer) gave a presentation outlining the organisation, operations and Fire Safety objectives of the Fire Services. (see attached presentation).

Policy areas for consideration by SPC:

- Kilkeny County Council- Fire and Emergency Operations Plan
- Kilkeny County Council- Fire and Rescue Service Fire Charges Policy.

Contributions from: Cllr. T. Breathnach. He raised a question regarding fire safety of building cladding following the Grenfell Tower fire, London. It was noted that a cladding review of buildings over 6 stories has been completed and there is no residential impact.

4. Library Services Presentation:

Josephine Coyne (County Librarian) gave a presentation outlining the services provided by Libraries in Kilkeny (see attached presentation).

Main areas of focus going forward:

- Increase Membership – National target
- Annual stock fund target per local authority - €4 per head of population-€1.14 in Kilkeny
- Place the library at the centre of the community
- Continue to develop partnerships at local and national level

Contributions from: Cllr. J. Coonan. He thanked the library staff and noted the value of libraries esp. for older people. The new City library is a welcome addition to Kilkeny. Additional funding is critical for the library services and is supported by the elected members. F. Canton echoed the contribution of Cllr. Coonan and added that the text service offering suggested reading/books available is a very valuable service. Cllr. T. Breathnach noted that a number of community groups have their own library in community halls. J. Coyne welcomed the opportunity to connect with them, possibly in 2020.

Agreed: T. Lauhoff (Kilkeny County Council, Senior Engineer) to make a presentation on the Abbey Quarter at a future SPC 5 meeting.

5. Heritage Office Presentation:

Dearbhala Ledwidge (Heritage Officer) gave a presentation on the services and projects provide by the Heritage Office. (see attached presentation). The Heritage Office works in partnership with:

- Local Authority
- Kilkeny Heritage Forum
- Communities

- Statutory Agencies
- Education Sector

Policy areas for consideration by SPC:

- Pollinator Programme 2020
- Heritage Policies & Priorities

Contributions from: Cllr. J. Coonan. Cllr. M. Brett. Support offered regarding the work of the Heritage Officer and the Schools Programme Support. Support for the Shop Fronts design/paint scheme was also noted. F. Canton noted the work undertaken at secondary School level and in particular the Seed programme which encourages students to grow a tree. Transition Year students are available to support programme roll outs.

6. Art Office Presentation:

Mary Butler (Arts Officer) gave a presentation on the services/programmes provided by the Arts Office.

Policy Areas:

- Inclusion Policy
- Public Art Policy
- Lifelong learning Policy
- Community Policy

Contributions from: D. Brophy regarding Diversity in Communities and Ethnic Inclusion. Cllr. T. Breathnach regarding the Broadsheet.

7. Director of Services Presentation

Mary Mulholland (Director of Services) gave a presentation on a number of policy areas to be considered by SPC 5 during the lifetime of the committee.

- C.C.F.C.S. Grants
- Events Grants
- PPN. While separate to the Local Authority, it is linked through the Community Section.
- Children and Youth Action Plan
- Rural Development
- Healthy Ireland
- Support Creative Industries

Contribution from Cllr. P. Dunphy. He suggested a grants booklet be made available to community groups. It was agreed that the grants process and information would be available on the Council website.

Agreed: Items to be reviewed and programme of work to be development and circulated to the committee. The committee will review at the next meeting and create/schedule policy action areas.

Next Meeting:

February 12th 2020. 3pm. Council Chamber, County Hall.