

<b>COMMUNITY, LEISURE &amp; EMERGENCY SERVICES STRATEGIC POLICY COMMITTEE</b>
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A meeting of the Community, Leisure & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee was held in Council Chamber, Limerick City and County Council, County Hall, Dooradoyle, Limerick, on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> February, 2017

The following were in attendance: -

**IN THE CHAIR:** Cllr. F. Foley

**PRESENT:** Cllr. J Costelloe, Cllr. M Collins, Cllr. M. Hourigan, Cllr. M. Hurley, Cllr. W. O' Donnell, Cllr. G. Mitchell, Cllr. L.M. Sheehy, Cllr. C McMahon, Cllr. M. McCreesh, Cllr. J. Loftus, Cllr. S. Lynch, Cllr. K. Sheahan, Cllr. M Sheahan, Cllr. B. Teefy, Ms. M Vaughan Mullane, Ms. M Healy, Mr. C. Flynn,

**IN ATTENDANCE:** Ms. C. Kirby, A/Director of Service  
Ms. J. Cotter Coughlan Director of Service  
Mr. D. Brady, Librarian  
Mr. S. O'Connor, Senior Social Worker  
Ms. G. Dollard, Administrative Officer  
Ms. R. Reidy, Social Development Directorate

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. V. Crowley, M. Fitzgerald, L. Toland, E. O'Donovan, D. Vuma.

The Chair Cllr. F. Foley offered his condolences on behalf of the CLES SPC to Cllr. M Sheahan on the death of his mother.

**Item 1: Adoption of Minutes of Community Leisure & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee held on 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2016.**

Minutes of meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> December, 2016 were proposed by Cllr. M. Hurley and seconded by Cllr. S. Lynch.

**Item 2:           Consideration of Notion of Motion submitted by Cllr. L.M. Sheehy**  
***“I will move at the next Meeting that Limerick City & County Council calls on the Minister for Housing, Planning, Community & Local Government to retract the policy that has introduced the roll-out of the ‘Open Library’ Initiative across Local Authorities”.***

Cllr. Sheehy discussed the importance of libraries and the many services they offer including events & exhibitions and also, the strong sense of community they encourage. Staff-less libraries are anti-community and can lead to anti social behaviour, she stated. She added that this could lead to a reduction in visits and a reduction in staff which would eventually lead to the closure of libraries.

Another concern was raised in relation to the provisions for disabled customers if an alarm/fire alarm is going off and the library is unmanned.

Several Councillors supported the notice of motion including Cllr. B Teefy, Cllr. M Sheahan, Cllr. S Lynch, Cllr. M Hourigan, Cllr. F Foley, Cllr. G Mitchell & Cllr. C McMahon.

Cllr. M Hurley suggested the Council wait and see how the pilot in Sligo & Offaly proceeds before making a decision.

Cllr. F Foley acknowledged the work of the Librarian Damien Brady and all the library staff. Mr. Brady outlined the pilot scheme which allows for over and above hours running parallel to usual staffed opening hours i.e. before and after official times. He added that a reduction in staff hours is not expected and stated that under the pilot scheme the opening hours will be from 8am to 10pm, 7 days a week, 365 days per year while staff will work their normal hours.

Mr. Brady acknowledged it will bring a number of challenges, one being the introduction of high end technology- c.c.t.v. where incidents will be monitored. He advised that members of the public will have to register to use the open library and complete a short course in health & safety/fire safety to ensure users abide by the rules. A swipe card will be used to enter the building and lighting and computers will come on once members enter. He confirmed that it is not expected to affect staff and that the possibility of a security guard will be considered if deemed necessary.

Cllr. C. McMahon asked that the extra hours in terms of staff be costed out and Mr Brady agreed to do this. He pointed out that different areas require different opening hours e.g. in some villages libraries are empty on a Saturday but are very busy on weekday evenings.

Cllr. L.M. Sheehy highlighted issues that some library staff may have with security citing the example of if someone has stayed in the library all night and something is missing on the following day. This will take staff away from their normal day to day duties, she added.

Notice of motion was seconded by Cllr. B. O'Donnell.

Cllr. K. Sheahan requested a bigger building be sought for Askeaton library as it is not suitable and also requested that the building be painted seven months ago. Cllr. M. Collins supported these requests. Mr. Brady informed members that money has been set aside in this year's budget to paint Askeaton library.

### **Item 3: Suicide Awareness Working Group – 2017 Workplan**

Cllr. LM Sheehy updated members on the 2017 workplan which included:

- Safe talk & Asist training for all Councillors and nominated frontline staff who deal with vulnerable people. Confirmation of dates to follow.
- Comhairle na nOg App for mental health to be investigated.
- Public Space project being developed in conjunction with the HSE & Gardai.
- Mentalhealth.ie – Promotion of this site & encourage usage of it.
- Media Guidelines in reporting suicides being drawn up in conjunction with the HSE & Samaritans.
- Holding a mental health conference/meet up for all stakeholders, if time allows.

Cllr. S. Lynch asked if the workplan could be expanded to include the education of parents in how to detect suicidal behaviour in their children and Cllr. L.M. Sheehy discussed the prevalence of cyber/online bullying. She reiterated the importance of support for parents.

Cllr. J Costello requested training for Councillors as they often deal with vulnerable constituents with mental health issues.

Cllrs. C. McMahon & M Hurley both stated they attended the Safe Talk training and thought it was very effective.

Cllr F. Foley acknowledged the hard work of Cllr. L.M. Sheehy and Cllr. L.M. Sheehy thanked the staff of the council for overseeing the administration of the group.

S. O'Connor stressed the importance of contacting TUSLA or the Gardai in the event of child protection issues arising in their interactions with their constituents.

### **Item 4: Local Economic & Community Plan actions/update.**

This agenda item was deferred to a later date.

### **Item 5: Update on St. Patrick's Day Festivities**

Aoife Potter-Cogan, Arts Officer, delivered a presentation on St. Patrick's day festivities which will take place from Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March to Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March throughout Limerick City & County. Highlights of the weekend are the Limerick St. Patrick's Day Parade on the 17<sup>th</sup> & the International Band Championship on the 19<sup>th</sup> provided by Limerick City & County, coordinated by the Arts Office with event production company, Grooveyard Event Management.

The parade will start at 12 noon at O'Connell Avenue (Wolfe Tone Street junction) and finish at Merchant's Quay.

Since being awarded National City of Culture 2014, Limerick City & County Arts Office has been working on the creative development of the St. Patrick's Festival Programme. This process involves collaboration with the Artistic Director, event management company, creative companies, entertainers and Limerick City & County Council Marketing and Communications Department.

The theme of this year's parade is *Our Story-This is where we belong* and sees the Arts Office working with Lumen, a local street spectacle company. A grant of €5,000 was given to this new street spectacle company to develop an entry for this year's parade as part of the ongoing Festivals & Events Development Strategy.

Lumen will focus on delivering a story in the history of the River Shannon in keeping with the theme of *Our Story-this is where we belong*.

The parade will also welcome creative content from national street spectacle companies Luxe & Artastic alongside circus acts and drummers.

Luxe are an award winning processional spectacle company and their passion is to bring their unique decorative style of sensory, multi layered spectacle to communities throughout Ireland and internationally.

Artastic & Limerick based Spotlight Stage School will come together again in 2017 to bring their award winning performances and colourful entry *Lost in Music* to the streets of Limerick.

17 bands will take part in the 47<sup>th</sup> International Band Championship consisting of over 1,000 talented marching band musicians from across Ireland, Europe & the U.S.

Led by The Irish Army Band, Ireland's only international band championship will start at 12 noon, ending with a free concert for the public in Arthur's Quay Park where the championship winners will be announced.

The parade is expected to attract 80,000 people into the city.

Cllr. J. Loftus suggested that last year's parade was too fragmented and said he hoped that this year's parade could be arranged in such a way that sets the rhythm and pace for every group with minimal gaps between groups if possible.

A number of members, including Cllr. M Hurley, Cllr. G Mitchell & Cllr. F Foley commended Aoife and all of the staff of the Arts Office for all their hard work in organising the parade and bringing footfall to the city.

J Cotter Coughlan also asked members to encourage people to attend the parade.

## **Item 6            Any Other Business**

Chair asked the members to support the PPN Community Day on 22<sup>nd</sup> February in Merchants Quay.

The next meeting of the Community, Leisure & Emergency Services Strategic Policy Committee will be held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April in the Council Chamber in Dooradoyle.

Minutes Proposed By:

Minutes Seconded By:

Minutes Signed By Chair: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_