

**Chairman's Report of SPC 5 Meeting - Community, Culture & Fire Services,
Meeting held on Thursday 6th of May, 2021 at 3.00p.m. via Microsoft Teams.**

1. Minutes of Last Meeting

Proposed by Cllr. Martin Brett, Seconded by Cllr. Pat Dunphy.

2. Public Art Policy

Annette highlighted the two main amendments to the policy document: -

- The limits under the scheme are set to a maximum of 1% of the overall capital budget before VAT and subject to the various limits, as outlined in the National Guidelines on Public Art.

It was agreed that Cllrs. Martin Brett and John Coonan would be the two SPC 5 representatives on the Public Art Management Group.

3. Library Update

County Librarian Josephine Coyne gave a presentation from the Library Department and highlighted the following from 2020: -

- eBooks borrowed 49% up on 2019
- The phased reopening in 2020 saw 57,254 books borrowed through collect and book and browse services.
- The mobile library service delivered 2,653 books by developing a drop off model to 30 primary schools and learning units across the County.
- Praise must go to the library staff for their resilience and creativity. Staff have produced quality driven relevant content targeted at those who need it most.
- The capital funding for Thomastown library is very welcome and highlighted the need to keep investing in libraries and increasing the book budget year on year.

4. Fire Service Update

John Collins gave an update from the Fire Services.

John gave an update on figures for the fire station during 2020, it highlighted the following: -

701 total incidents, Fires attended 220, special services 365, 116 false alarms, 3 malicious, 113 good intent.

A query was raised on new site for Fire Station, still looking at possible sites on the ring road.

5. Decade of Centenaries

Dearbhala Ledwidge Heritage Officer, gave an update from Heritage which included the following: -

Cruinniú na Nog Programme 2021- June 12th, National day of free creativity for children and young people, this day is co-ordinated by the Culture section and funded by the Kilkenny Creative Ireland Programme via public grant scheme. Dearbhala also outlined the grants awarded for this year.

Decade of Centenaries Programme 2021

The Heritage office and the Library service collaborated on a number of projects including, The History Fix on KCLR, 14 history podcasts on events in Kilkenny in 1921, a local history film and a brochure about the Kilkenny Gaol break-out and a grant scheme.

6. Biodiversity Programme

National Hedgehog survey, Citizen science hedgehog survey by researchers at NUI Galway and the National Biodiversity Data Centre is co-funded by the Heritage Office.

Pledge your garden for pollinators

Put your garden on the map, the pollinators plan online mapping system tracks actions for pollinators across the country. You can add your pollinator friendly garden to the map at pollinators.biodiversityireland.ie

7. AOB

Town & Village Renewal Schemes

The 2021 scheme was announced on Monday 4th of May, with a change of focus on project support and remote working.

Nationally €5m announced for connected Hubs. BCP Broadband connecting port, maximum grant of €75,000, 90% of funding available.

A PR video is being promoted through Social Media on projects funded by Town & Village and under RRDF.

Date for next meeting Thursday 15th of July.

Cllr. John Brennan advised the committee that this is last meeting as Chair and Cllr. Pat Dunphy would be taking over the position of Chair. John thanked all the staff for their help and courtesy over the last 2 years and appreciated all the great work the staff do, he also thanked all the members of the committee.

John was thanked by all committee members present for always being a fair and pleasant Chairman.