



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Report to Arts, Culture, Leisure
and Recreation SPC
27th February 2023
Item No. 15

**Arts and Cultural Advisory Group
Minutes of Meeting held on Monday 24th October 2022, 9.30 a.m.
Hybrid Meeting**

Present: Cllr. Cat O’Driscoll; Cllr. Patricia Roe; Ray Yeates; Ruairí Ó Cuív;; Michael Dempsey; Brendan Teeling, Ruth McGowan, Adekunle Gomez, Ross Keane, Ciaran Taylor, Sunil Sharpe; Willie White.

Apologies: Cllr. Dearbhail Butler, Anthony Flynn.

In Attendance: Paula Farrell

Chair: Cllr. Cat O’Driscoll

Minutes of previous meeting held on 5th September 2022 were approved.

Matters Arising: None

Hugh Lane Report:

Michael Dempsey reported that visitors’ numbers to the Gallery in September were 13, 533. Quarter 3 visitor numbers were 44,361. The current Exhibition, *Eva Gonzales is what Dublin needs*, ended on the 18th September and was a great success. The exhibition, retitled as *Discover Manet and Eva Gonzales* will open at the National Gallery, London, on 21st October. The current exhibition, *Bones in the Attic*, was launched by Ivana Bacik TD on 11th August. The Children’s Arts Exhibition, *What I Love About the Great Outdoors*, the Gallery’s inaugural city-wide exhibition received very positive feedback from teachers and families and has been extended to the 8th January 2023.

Libraries:

Brendan Teeling presented the Report for Libraries and reported that their focus remains on increasing the footfall in Libraries which is still lower than pre-pandemic times. A Street Art campaign for Libraries is currently being organised. The Children’s Art in Libraries collaboration with the Arts Office and other collaborations with DCC Culture Company are progressing well. He confirmed that the new Library in Finglas is due to be completed by April 2023. The temporary Library at the Richmond Barracks site in Inchicore will remain open. The original Library in Inchicore will not open again due to access issues. This building will be developed for community use.

The Arts Office Report:

Dublin City Public Art Programme:

The Public Art Officer presented the public art report. He reported that the Citizen Commissioners engagement had commenced with him meeting groups in the Darndale and that there had been a positive response to the commissioning process. Updates and progress reports were provided for ongoing commissions including the Docklands Light

Commission by Lava Gallagher, Temple Bar Square Commission by Isabel Nolan, and the deadline of the 1st of November for the research and development phase of two proposals under Strand 2 of the public art programme.

Cllr Cat O'Driscoll raised the issue of a replacement temporary commission for the O'Connell plinth outside City Hall as she believed that the display of RGB Sconce by Alan Phelan as part of Sculpture Dublin had been very positive. The Public Art officer reported that if there was interest in a further temporary commission, processes would have to commence shortly to have a new work in place next year.

The proposal from the Ukrainian Embassy to Ireland requesting that Dublin City Council 'wrap' a statue as a symbolic gesture of solidarity with the Ukrainian people was discussed. The Group agreed that there were issues relating to any proposal to wrap one of the City Council's historic statues as many of the historic statues and monuments are protected structures and so conservation and planning issues would have to be considered, as well as the constraints imposed by the close proximity of the LUAS Green and Red lines to many of the works on O'Connell Street and College Green. However, the Group also thought that it was worth exploring ideas for such a symbolic gesture and requested the Public Art Officer to present ideas to the next meeting of ACAG.

As part of The Children's Art in Libraries initiative the Arts Office and Libraries recently launched their Creative Hubs commissions. This will feature three new free of charge projects for children in Ballyfermot, Cabra and Coolock libraries during October and November. Children in these libraries are also invited to a musical adaptation of Roddy Doyle's novel *The Giggler Treatment*, created in conjunction with The Ark. All three libraries will also host two performances of *The Galaxy of Occupancies* dance event which will run on selected dates from 24th October to 29th November.

The LAB Gallery –

O, To have little house, the first major solo show by recent graduate Michelle Malone, will run until November 5th 2022.

Dublin City Council South Central Area Office, Public Realm, Parks and Arts worked together to partner with *The Form Foundation and Société* to bring the **NEOPETS** exhibition, by New York artist Bunny Rogers, to the streets of Dublin. This special 8-week exhibition is part of a new, collaborative effort, led by The Form Foundation, takes place on Kildare Street for 8 weeks only, from the 5th of October – 5th December 2022.

Opening the general discussion, Cllr. O' Driscoll acknowledged the good progress that is being made in relation to Artists Workspaces. Following enquiries about the proposed new 500 seater venue for the city which was identified as a matter of urgency, Ray Yeates confirmed that he recently met with Turley Strategic Communications for discussions on this which included whether it would be a new building and part of a planned city development (the Connolly Quarter was suggested as a potential site); or a found building and if so, where would it be located. The proposed funding model would encompass a multi-agency approach. Confirming that a revenue model would be required, matters such as staffing, its design, and its potential multi-use function and whether or not it would be a 24 hour venue will be up for discussion. The next stage after identifying a suitable site will be a Feasibility Report. Turley have identified Rathmines as an area particularly deficient in venues. On the suggestion of Sunil Sharpe who noted that the Stella Cinema space in Rathmines is currently for sale and enquired as to whether it could be considered for a future civic space, Cllr. O'Driscoll said that this suggestion could be fed in to the Feasibility Study.

RY reiterated that the organisation of arts infrastructure in the city was the concern of the Executive of the City Council and that while some developers are motivated by the 5% obligation, developers are generally not 'clued' in to this. To this end the Developers Toolkit

is progressing well and will advance a common language for Developers going forward. RY confirmed that he hopes to also progress a Developers Art Conference in 2023. He will also be meeting with Sports Officers in the City Council by year's end to discuss the partiality of using their spaces for the purposes of the Arts. The Sports Office of the Council is open to expanding the use of their premises for this purpose.

RY said that he will relay enquiries from members of the ACAG regarding the use of the Smithfield Fruit Market to Siobhan Maher in the Planning Section. Cllr. Roe confirmed that other events are being planned there until the end of this year. Cllr. O' Driscoll will also be putting a motion on the Fruit Market at an upcoming meeting of Councillors. Regarding the Eden building in Temple Bar Square, RY reiterated that the building is managed by another section of the City Council and requires a budget to render it safe. Following on from reports from ACAG members of the increase of anti-social behaviour around Eden, RY said would be raising the matter of the Eden building at an upcoming meeting with his manager.

The Creative Ireland 5 Year Strategy is now on its penultimate draft. The Creative Ireland Programme is under review. A particular problem that has been identified is the fact that payments are made according to the population of each county however funding is divided 31 ways. This negatively impacts directly on the capital city with for example Dublin being funded to the same level of County Leitrim, that is, €145,161. There are also administrative difficulties using the Creative Ireland portal. Ideally the strategy for the next 5 years should focus on 3 areas: the Irish language, sectional collaboration and the targeting of underestimated communities.

AOB:

Cllr. O'Driscoll requested that the potential Developers Conference, as well as the setting up of a Working Group on Artists Workspaces, be noted as Agenda items for ACAG in 2023

At the request of Cllr. Roe, RY confirmed that he will send the audit of Artist Workspaces to all ACAG members.

Answering an enquiry regarding an update on the Ambassador Cinema on O'Connell Street, Willie White confirmed that MCD have refurbished it and that it may be a bigger venue than first thought.

Following an enquiry from Adekunle Gomez about whether the Dept. of Foreign Affairs have contacted the Arts Office about Africa Day, RY confirmed that they have not. Cllr. O'Driscoll said that she would endeavour to get more information on this matter.

Due to other commitments, Cllr. Dearbhail Butler will not be participating in the ACAG going forward.

The date of the next ACAG meetings during 2023 are not yet confirmed.