



Arts & Cultural Advisory Group

Arts and Cultural Advisory Group Notes of Meeting held on Monday 6th November 2023, 9.30 a.m. City Hall / Hybrid meeting

Present: Cllr. Cat. O'Driscoll; Cllr. Patricia Roe; Cllr. Hazel de Nortúin; Mary MacSweeney; Sinead Connolly; Ruairí Ó Cuív; Ruth McGowan, Adekunle Gomez, Ross Keane; Sunil Sharpe.

Apologies: Cllr. Claire Byrne; Ray Yeates; Willie White.

In Attendance: Paula Farrell

Chair: Cllr. Cat O'Driscoll

Minutes of previous meeting held on 4th September 2023 were approved.

Matters Arising: Referring to the minutes of the ACAG meeting held on 3rd July, at which Ross Keane expressed concerns about the degeneration of Temple Bar, anti-social behaviour in the city and his request for members of Temple Bar Cultural Trust to attend ACAG to report on the matter, Councillor O'Driscoll confirmed that she wrote to the Chairs of both the inner city and city wide Joint Policing Committees on the matter. The issue will be put on the agendas of the Committees with a view to the formation of a Task Force in due course. Temple Bar Cultural Trust have not yet confirmed their attendance at ACAG.

Following a request from Cllr. Roe for an update on the progress of the Rupert Guinness Theatre, Cllr. O'Driscoll confirmed that there has been no further update since the City Arts Officer met with Diageo a number of weeks ago.

Cllr. O'Driscoll confirmed that a date for Africa Day has not yet been settled on.

Hugh Lane Gallery Report:

Michael Dempsey presented the Hugh Lane report. *Andy Warhol's Three Times Out* opened on the 6th October and continues until *January 2024*. The Gallery is facilitating a huge demand for tour requests to visits to the exhibition. An average of 1,300 visitors a day visited the Gallery during its first 10 days. A programme of talks, film screenings, art workshops and community engagement has been curated by the Gallery's Education team exploring themes arising from the collection. The Gallery is also hosting **WE CAN CAN CAN**, an Education and Community Outreach project by visual artist **Liliane Puthod** in response to the exhibition. Members of ACAG congratulated the Gallery on the success of the exhibition.

Libraries report:

Ciara Dardis reported that Dublin City Libraries will be working in association with the Dublin Book Festival which runs over 5 days November. Ten Libraries will act as venues for audiences to attend sessions by numerous authors. Libraries, in association with the Hugh Lane Gallery and Creative Ireland, will also host a series of events for the duration of the Andy Warhol *Three Times Out* exhibition. Beginning in November, events will include workshops aimed at adults, teenagers, children and those with neuro-diversity. The Creative Hubs autumn series will take place at the existing Creative Hubs branches (Ballyfermot, Cabra and Coolock) and at a 4th new Hub in the Central Library. The 4 venues will feature in an autumn programme with The Ark, with performance and workshops in music, dance, drama and visual art.

The Arts Office Report

Public Art: The Public Art Officer provided an update on the commissions across all three strands of the Dublin City Public Art Programme. In addition, the Public Art Officer presented the proposal *The Blue Trees* from Konstantin Dimopoulos intended to raise awareness about deforestation and the importance of trees to people by painting trees blue with water-based and biologically-safe paint. He presented issues which had been raised in discussions with Parks, Biodiversity and Landscape Services that despite the excellent intentions, the project could 'lead to adverse comment'. Members of the Group while extolling the project did not support funding the project outside any formal process. The Chair also pointed out that Dublin City Council had a strong biodiversity strategy and that the arts were well integrated into this.

Maintenance of Public Art

The Public Art Officer presented a report on the care and maintenance of public art. The report was welcomed by the members of the Group stating that it gave great insight into the issues arising from the care of a sculpture collection in the public realm. In addition to focus on individual artworks there was a discussion about approaches to the overall care of the collection. This discussion included the need for art expertise to guide approaches to conservation and cleaning but at the same time highlighted the value of close working relations between the Arts Office, Heritage Office, Parks, Biodiversity and Landscape Services and all the Area Offices. It was agreed, that in addition to a reactive approach to incidents of vandalism, a systematic approach to maintenance was also desirable.

Mary MacSweeney confirmed that the budgetary cycle is currently at a stage where it will be possible to review the funds that could be used for the maintenance of public art. Cllr. O'Driscoll suggested that each Administrative Area could make a contribution to its upkeep and restoration and that a dedicated fund for this purpose and a collaborative approach with the Area Offices, Parks and the Arts Office would speed up the process of maintaining and restoring public art. Both Cllr. O'Driscoll and Ruth McGowan suggested that a public awareness campaign of the budgetary impact of vandalism on the civic space would be very welcome. Cllr. O'Driscoll said that she will bring the matter of the maintenance and restoration of public art to the SPC along with the suggestion of there being a public media campaign to raise awareness of the value of public art.

Arts Office report:

Sinead Connolly presented the Arts Office report and noted that as part of Dublin City Council's Partnership Framework with the Arts Council, Turley and Thrive have been conducting qualitative and quantitative research on hard and soft infrastructure in the North West area. The data collection phase is now coming to a close and the final focus group will take place this week. The final report on the analyses of this data is due by year's end.

SC confirmed that the recipient of the 2023 ARC-LAB Gallery Curatorial Scholarship, in partnership with IADT, will work with Dublin City Arts Office on programming and research into curatorial strategies. The ARC-LAB Scholar is funded as a full-time student on the IADT MA in Art and Research Collaboration (ARC), which is an 18-month practical Masters programme taught in the LAB. This year's recipient of the scholarship, Clara McSweeney,

has a particular interest in exploring reactivating overlooked and ignored spaces in the urban environment through various artist's works. The outcome of Clara's curatorial project will be presented in the LAB Gallery as part of the gallery's public events programme in 2025.

Artane Place Artist Workspaces: The Arts Office has been working with Xestra management to convert unused spaces into artist workspaces. The first two artists have now moved into two individual studios in the Artane Place business park (formerly Butterly Business Park). The construction work on unit 35a, formerly the Stardust building, is currently underway and on track for completion before Christmas 2023. 35a will comprise of 10 individual artist studios

Creative Places Darndale: Creative Places Darndale has entered into the final year of the Arts Council award period and plans are underway for the 3rd years programme. A facilitation session which brought together the artist coordinators and steering Committee of CPD was hosted on 28th of September. The session provided space to plan for the future functionality of the steering committee and to plan for possible funding for a further year 4/5 of Creative Places. The Arts Office has been asked to chair the steering committee for year three with the intention of ultimately appointing someone local as chair to steer the project.

The Lab Gallery is currently exhibiting '**Shahid** شاهد'. This exhibition is running from September to December 2023 and features works from Basil Al-Rawi and Diao Lagan. Diao Lagan hosted an Introduction to the History of Arabic Calligraphy workshop in the Gallery on the 4th of November. '**HOLDING ON lightly**' is also running at the Gallery until December 2023 and features the works of Elaine Grainger. Diao Lagan did a walk through of his work and the exhibition '**Shahid** شاهد' on **Culture Night 2023**. Elaine Grainger also performed to activate her exhibition *HOLDING ON lightly* throughout the night.

Exploring & Thinking Practice Sharing Event and Bursary Award 2023 is a collaborative framework for early childhood arts in the Dublin region and the four Dublin local authorities. The Exploring and Thinking Research Evaluation and Sharing Day is supported by The Arts Council's Invitation to Collaboration Award which will take place on November 16th 2023 in Malahide Castle.

Arts Infrastructure Sunil Sharpe welcomed the partnership with the Arts Office and Arts Council but noted that the City Council pushes for more spaces in the city generally. He asked if, within the context of the SPC led Arts infrastructure Steering Group, that a definition of arts infrastructure could be clarified or expanded. Regarding the Turley and Thrive North West area research project currently underway, SS asked if this was a repeat of previous research recently produced by Turley. Sinead Connolly clarified that the partnership with the Arts Council and the Arts Office is a dialogue on arts infrastructural development. Definitions pertaining to arts infrastructure will be addressed within the context of the Developers Toolkit currently being developed by the Arts Office. The previous research conducted by Turley provided a light touch map of hard infrastructure in the North inner city. The current research takes a deeper dive in to the soft Infrastructure of the area in conjunction with potential partners of the Arts Office in the region.

AOB:

AK requested an update on the plans for the Monument to the Women of the Revolutionary Decade. Cllr. O'Driscoll confirmed that there is currently a Working Group focusing on this. RÓC confirmed that the major issues to be settled was the location of the proposed monument. He also stated that the competition for the monument will be an international one. The Arts Office is also looking at international examples of monuments to inform the project budget and is planning to have a symposium as part of the launch of the commission to focus on the role of women during the decade.

Following a question from Ross Keane about the proposed increase in Arts Grant Awards, Cllr. O'Driscoll confirmed that the report on this matter came to the SPC in September. Budgets will be finalised in the coming weeks.

Cllr. Roe also enquired about the potential wider use of the Ambassador Theatre for arts in the city, possibly in a Meanwhile Use capacity. Councillor O'Driscoll confirmed that she is awaiting a reply from the Planning and Urban Form SPC whom she wrote to in relation to linking in with the Arts SPC on the issue of derelict buildings in the city.

A site visit to Kilmainham Mills, Dublin 8, took place on November 1st. Further sites visits to the Mills for ACAG members can be arranged going forward. There is potential opportunity for the site to be used as a Meanwhile Use space. This will form part of a future vision of how the space will be used going forward. Consultation is ongoing.

Ruth McGowan enquired about the proposal submitted by The Giant Company Project and the presentation of part of the proposed installation in Dame Street. RÓC confirmed that the project was referred to ACAG from the Planning Department which requested the advice of the Group. He confirmed that the Group had advised against the proposal for the Ambassador due to scale and impact on the historic city core. SS asked if the founder of The Giant Company, Paddy Dunning, could be invited to speak at an upcoming SPC, expressing the view that people in the private sector need to be brought to the table in relation to the arts in Dublin. Mary Mac Sweeney agreed that a process should be in place within the Council that could engage with private individuals and suggested that this might tie in with the guidelines on new developments.

Cllr. O'Driscoll noted that the upcoming Workshop on the European Green Deal for Circular Festivals, which addresses how to take a circular approach to festivals, is taking place in the Morrison Hotel on 7th November and is open for ACAG members to attend.

The dates of the 2024 Arts Culture Advisory Group meetings have not yet been confirmed.