

**KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of Presentations to council from**  
**Sult na Sollán and Kildare Fáilte**  
**held at 12.00 o'clock Monday 24 February 2020**  
**Áras Chill Dara, Devoy Park, Naas, Co Kildare.**

**Members Present:** Councillor S Doyle (Cathaoirleach), Councillors A Breen, F Brett, B Caldwell, B Clear, Í Cussen, K Duffy, A Feeney, D Fitzpatrick, I Keatley, C Kelly, N Killeen, V Liston, V P Martin, F McLoughlin Healy, S Moore J Neville, P O'Dwyer, T O'Dwyer, R Power, E Sammon, M Stafford, M Wall, P Ward, and B Weld.

**Apologies:** Councillors V Behan, A Breslin, M Coleman, A Connolly, B Dooley, T Durkan, A Farrelly, C Galvin, P Hamilton, N Heavey, P McEvoy, N Ó'Ceairúil, C Pender and B Wyse.

**Also Present:** Mr P Carey, Chief Executive, Messrs J Boland, T McDonnell, E Ryan (Directors of Service), Ms A Aspell and Ms S Kavanagh (Directors of Service), Ms C O'Grady (Meetings Administrator) Ms K Keane (Meetings Secretary) and other officials.

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**01/0220**

**Sult na Sollán**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr Daithí De Faoite and Ms Siobhain Grogan from Sult na Sollán to the meeting.

Mr De Faoite thanked the members for the opportunity to attend the meeting and thanked Donnócha O'Diarmuida and the Irish language committee for all their assistance to date and welcomed Ms Betty Maguire to the role of Irish Officer. He noted that they had launched the Irish Plan in Kildare a year ago with Kildare being the first county in Ireland to have a language plan.

Ms Grogan gave an overview on the Irish Language Planning for Contae Chill Dara 2019-2023 which included the following:

- Details of events which had been held in 2019 to celebrate traditional music, culture and the Irish language
- Details of all active participants in the practice and speaking of the Irish language throughout the county
- That census 2016 informed the members of the status of the Irish language countywide
- Details of the five-year plan for the Irish language in County Kildare
- Structure of the Irish language plan
- The Language Plan – Vision for County Kildare – including the objectives for County Kildare
- The opportunity to develop a cultúrlann on community lands in Sallins.
- To introduce awareness for people by reading the language plan which can be accessed on [www.sultnasollan.ie/gaeilge](http://www.sultnasollan.ie/gaeilge) .
- Development of a dedicated section of each Local Area Plan (LAP) for An Ghaeilge.
- Approve funding to promote Irish Language signage for local businesses.
- Engagement with local language committees was vital to promote the Irish language.

Ms Grogan also confirmed that the GAA was a natural partner in this Irish language vision for the county and that a consultation process was underway in this regard.

The Cathaoirleach, members and Chief Executive thanked Mr De Faoite and Ms Grogan for their comprehensive presentation and wished them and their team every success in the future.

## **02/0220**

### **Presentation from Kildare Fáilte**

The Cathaoirleach welcomed Mr Mongey Chairman and Ms Mangan, Chief Executive of Kildare Fáilte, to the meeting.

Mr Mongey thanked the members for the invitation noting it had been a very busy year with many advances being made in relation to tourism in Kildare. He thanked the members and the council for their continued support to Kildare Fáilte in the work they do in promoting Kildare as one of the lead tourism destinations in the country.

Ms Mangan then gave an overview on the 2020 Vision for Kildare tourism as follows:

- To build an exciting, sustainable tourism industry where stakeholders worked together to design and deliver quality experiences for domestic and international visitors, create jobs, boost local economies and protect the natural environment
- Tourism contributed €127 million in direct revenue to the local economy annually
- Over 600 enterprises were involved in accommodation, food and beverage services in Kildare employing approximately 600 people.
- National Tourism day was taking place on the 17 April
- Key festival event for the forthcoming year was the 2-day Taste of Kildare event at the Curragh racecourse.

A discussion took place amongst the members with a number of items raised:

- Would it be possible to provide more emphasis on the promotion of walking and cycling routes, on Kildare Fáilte's website.
- What engagement has Kildare Fáilte had with the council in advancing the Curragh as a sustainable tourism location and was there a plan around keeping tourists that visit key tourism destination centres ie. Kildare Retail Village, Newbridge Silverware, in the county for longer.
- Clarification sought in relation to Kildare Fáilte Boards constitution.
- An updates sought on:
  - o National Stud museum
  - o Shackleton museum
  - o Historic monuments sites ie. Moone High Cross
  - o Tourism signage throughout the county, particularly south of the county
  - o Promotion of the county outside of Ireland
  - o Greenway and Blueway projects
  - o Use of Bogs ie. Lullymore, Mouds Bog as tourism destinations
  - o Use of Twinning Committees and partnership approach with schools

Ms Mangan responded to the queries and questions raised and thanked the members for their interest and continued support of the work Kildare Fáilte were doing. She confirmed that a "joint destination ticket" was being considered for Kildare in order to maximise tourist interest. She noted that a feasibility study was being prepared for the Curragh and the Heritage Officer was feeding into this and she would clarify in relation to the query on the Boards constitution after the meeting.

Ms Mangan also confirmed that a lot of collaboration was ongoing with the racecourses in Kildare in bringing them together to maximise the promotion of Kildare as a racing destination. Ms Mangan confirmed she would be travelling to Boston with the council and Kildare Chamber later in the year with a view to promoting the county there. She stated she would be happy to work with the members in relation to further promoting historic monument sites within the county, improving tourism signage and increasing the tourism potential of both Lullymore and other bogs in the county. She stated the National Stud museum was a very exciting project and would be a very important tourism destination for Kildare in the future.

The Chief Executive thanked Mr Mongey and Ms Mangan for their very informative presentation noting that tourism is a huge business both for the county and the country as a whole. He thanked the members for their continued support noting that year on year, the budget for tourism has been increased. He noted that signage needed to be looked at strategically and confirmed that work is ongoing in the background in relation to the issue of hotel bed spaces shortage in the county.

The Cathaoirleach and members thanked Mr Mongey and Ms Mangan for their presentation and wished them continued success in their roles in promoting the county at both a national level and to the wider international community. The Cathaoirleach stated she personally wanted to acknowledge the hard work being done by Mr Mongey, Ms Mangan and their very effective team.

The meeting concluded.