

Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategic Policy Committee Hybrid Meeting 10/12/2025

A meeting of the Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategic Policy Committee (CLAHC SPC) was held on Wednesday, 10th December 2025 at 3pm in the Council Chamber Dooradoyle and Online via Microsoft Teams.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Chairperson:

Cllr. Fergus Kilcoyne
Cllr. Azad Talukder
Cllr. Brigid Teefy
Cllr. Catherine Slattery
Cllr. Dan McSweeney
Cllr. Daniel Butler
Cllr. Gregory Conway
Cllr. John Sheahan
Cllr. Martin Ryan
Cllr. Michael Collins
Cllr. Olivia O'Sullivan
Cllr. Pdraigh Reale
Cllr. P.J. Carey
Cllr. Sarah Beasley
Cllr. Shane Hickey O'Mara
Mr. Pdraig Lohan
Mr. John Ward

APOLOGIES:

Ms. Marion Hurley
Mr. Randal Hodkinson

NOT PRESENT:

Cllr. Tommy Hartigan
Mr. Khurram Iqbal
Ms. Louise Crowley
Mr. Pete Moles

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. Brian McCarthy, Director of Service
Mr. Sean Lenihan, Director of Service
Ms. Karen Burke, Town Regeneration Officer
Ms. Anne Rizzo, Senior Executive Officer
Mr. Paul Moroney, Community Safety Co-Ordinator
Ms. Joanna O'Donoghue, Staff Officer
Ms. Aisling Coughlan, Assistant Staff Officer

Declaration of Interest:

The Meetings Administrator stated that, in line with Part 15 of the Local Government Act, 2001, as amended, and the Standing Order, all present members should notify the Cathaoirleach of any declaration of interest in any item due for discussion at the Meeting. No such interests were declared.

Item 1: Minutes:

The Minutes of the Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture Strategic Policy Committee held on 15th October 2025 were proposed by Cllr. M. Collins and seconded by Cllr. A. Talukder and adopted.

Item2: Matters Arising

The Chairperson expressed appreciation to Director of Service Stéphane Duclot as he transitions to the Planning Department and extended a warm welcome to the two new Directors, Brian McCarthy and Seán Lenihan, who were present at the meeting. Both Directors were invited to introduce themselves to the members, which they did.

Item 3: New Local Community Safety Partnership and the Pilot Community Safety Warden's scheme

Paul Moroney, Community Safety Co-Ordinator, briefed members on the new Local Community Safety Partnership (LCSP) and the Pilot Community Safety Wardens scheme.

The LCSP was established under the Policing, Security and Community Safety Act 2024 and the 2025 Safety Partnership Regulations, marking a significant shift from traditional policing to a collaborative, preventative model that prioritises community engagement and trust-building. Its objectives include developing a Community Safety Plan tailored to Limerick's needs, fostering multi-agency collaboration among Local Authorities, Gardaí, HSE, TUSLA, and community representatives, and promoting community-led safety initiatives to enhance wellbeing and public confidence.

The Community Safety Wardens scheme is a pilot supported by the Department of Justice and the Mayor. Wardens have a non-enforcement role, providing a visible presence to engage with the public, report issues, and support events. They act as a bridge between the community and services. Benefits include deterring anti-social behaviour, improving perceptions of safety, and strengthening trust and communication between agencies.

The Community Safety Co-Ordinator emphasised that the LCSP represents a pivotal move toward community-led safety, focusing on collaboration, transparency, and

adaptability. With strong partnerships among businesses, residents, local authorities, and Gardaí, Limerick is positioned as a national exemplar of integrated, community-driven safety.

Members welcomed the wardens and expressed their support for the scheme.

Cllr. D. McSweeney asked when the wardens would be deployed in Limerick, whether the scheme would be rolled out nationally, and what resources were being provided by the Mayor.

The Community Safety Co-Ordinator advised that wardens are expected to be on the streets before Christmas. Members were informed that the scheme is a pilot project operating only in Limerick, Dublin North Inner City, Cork, Longford, and Waterford. In terms of funding, €150,000 has been allocated from community safety funding, with an additional €100,000 from the Mayoral fund to support a fourth warden position.

Cllr. M. Ryan asked how the wardens will be identifiable.

The Co-Ordinator confirmed that wardens will wear distinctive green and white uniforms and will be introduced to communities through a press release. Wardens will be highly visible on the streets.

Cllr. C. Slattery queried whether wardens would work in pairs, what safety measures are in place, and their working hours.

Mr. Moroney advised that a risk assessment has been completed, and lone working will not be permitted. Wardens will operate in pairs or groups of three and have received extensive training, including manual handling, managing violence and aggression, and first aid. They will work two shifts covering 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Cllr. S. Hickey O'Mara asked if wardens had training to address multicultural differences, mental health, and other sensitive situations.

The Co-Ordinator confirmed that wardens have completed SALAM training (focused on combating anti-Muslim hatred), suicide awareness training, and are prepared to handle sensitive situations to the best of their ability.

Cllr. M. Ryan asked if the scheme will extend to the county and raised concerns about Garda visibility in rural Limerick. He also queried how councillors not on the LCSP can engage with the partnership and what engagement with local community groups is planned.

Mr. Moroney stated that wardens will primarily be based in the city centre but hopes to introduce them to the county in the future. The partnership will hold meetings for elected members twice a year to address concerns, which can then be raised with Gardaí. Once the Community Safety Plan is developed, meetings with specific community groups will be arranged.

Cllr. D. Butler asked if wardens will be on the streets before Christmas, given the short timeframe.

The Co-Ordinator confirmed that uniforms are the final outstanding item and, once delivered, wardens will be deployed—expected next week.

Cllr. A. Talukder asked how wardens will communicate with Gardaí and elected members.

Mr. Moroney explained that wardens will use the ProWorks app to report issues, with emergencies handled via the standard 999 number. Wardens will also have mobile phones for contact, and meetings can be arranged as needed.

Cllr. G. Conway requested to be notified when wardens visit the Kilmallock area so he can introduce them to local community members and organisations.

It was confirmed that while wardens will mainly operate in Limerick city centre, any rural visits will be communicated to relevant elected members, who will be invited to join.

Item 4: Consultation on ‘Our Rural Future’ Programme

Karen Burke, Town Regeneration Officer, briefed members on the consultation process for the ‘Our Rural Future 2026 -2031 Consultation document-’

The Consultation Document sets out the next phase of the rural development framework and gather public input on priorities for 2026–2031. Karen highlighted key achievements since 2021, including the National Broadband Plan, 400 Connected Hubs, Regional Enterprise Plans, establishment of Technological Universities, and Town Centre First Plans.

The vision for 2026–2031 is for a thriving and inclusive rural Ireland where people can live, learn, and work in connected, sustainable, and vibrant communities. The consultation document identifies four core pillars: Thriving Rural Places, A Strong & Diverse Rural Economy, Resilient Rural Communities, and A Greener Rural Future. Key challenges include the need for a whole-of-government approach to infrastructure, housing, transport, and Innovation utilising new technologies, as well as strategies to support activity throughout the day and evening time in rural towns.

Seven consultation questions were presented, and members were invited to review them and share any comments with the Town Regeneration Officer for inclusion in Limerick City and County Council’s submission. The consultation remains open until **Friday, 12th December**.

The Chair and members acknowledged the challenges facing rural Limerick, including the closure of small local businesses which play a vital role in their communities. However, they also noted the positive changes already taking place in towns and villages such as Bruree and Kilmallock. The Town Regeneration Officer, the Town Team, and all council staff involved in these projects were commended for their excellent work in supporting rural development.

Cllr. M. Ryan asked about the criteria for Town Centre First funding, noting that some towns, such as Cappamore, were not included.

The Town Regeneration Officer explained that Cappamore had been put forward for inclusion and was not included. She assured members that the team will engage with the area to explore alternative funding opportunities and will review additional options in the new year.

Item 5: Update on Strategic Policy Committee work plan development

The Meeting Administrator informed members that, in line with the Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) review completed in 2023, each SPC is required to have a work plan. The Corporate Department will collaborate with all Limerick Strategic Policy Committees in the new year to develop these work plans for Limerick City and County Council SPCs.

Item 6: Date of next meeting

The Chairperson Cllr F. Kilcoyne thanked all for the presentations made. The next meeting of the Community, Leisure, Arts, Heritage and Culture SPC will take place on Wednesday 11th February 2026 in Council Chamber, Dooradoyle at 3pm and online. Dates of the 2026 meetings will be circulated to members.

Meeting ended at 4.30 pm

Minutes Proposed By: Cllr P. REALE

Minutes Seconded By: Cllr B. TEEFY

Minutes Signed by Chair: Fergus Kilcoyne Date: _____