

## Appendix – 2.15

### CDB Cultural Review of the County (November 2000)

Tipperary (South Riding) County Development Board focused on the evolution of a County Cultural Strategy at its November meeting. The County Cultural Strategy needs to address the following questions:

- Where are we now? What is the cultural situation of the County?
- Where do we want to be? How should the cultural situation of the county be changed by the year 2010?
- How do we get from where we are to where we want to be? (County Cultural Strategy).

The Board had formally established a Cultural Working Group to carry out the preparatory work needed to address the strategic questions raised above. The Cultural Working Group had circulated a consultative document on culture to more than 400 stakeholders. Initial responses to the consultation document indicated a divergence of focus:

- ✓ Culture is about preserving the past
- ✓ Culture is about facilitating the future.

The cultural consultative document also formed the basis for the Board input into the cultural review of South Tipperary.

- ❖ The working definition of culture - ‘culture is the personality of the county’ - was noted as being broad.
- ❖ The **UN definition of culture** is as follows: “The whole complex of distinctive spiritual, material intellectual and emotional features that characterise a society or social group includes not only the arts and letters but also modes of life fundamental rights of the human being value system, traditional and beliefs”.
- ❖ While a broad view of culture is worthy the County Cultural Strategy will need to ultimately focus aspects that can make a difference and add to the cultural situation of the county. Hopefully, the strategy will specify a list of cultural activities that should be revived or strengthened.
- ❖ All of County Tipperary shares a great sporting tradition. South Tipperary has a particular strength in its built heritage, which reflects almost the entire history of Ireland. South Tipperary also has a strong association with the equine industry. It has a rural image with a dominant town (Clonmel).
- ❖ Tipperary people have a strong tradition of cohesion and co-operation. Culture is about developing tolerance. Awareness of the value of different cultures reminds us of the cosmopolitan nature of Irish culture.
- ❖ An objective of cultural strategy is to facilitate a ‘greater sense of ownership’ of the place. There is room for improvement in our ‘pride of place’ as reflected in visual pollution such as litter and the poor appearance of some houses and parts of town/villages.
- ❖ Creating culture to satisfy a tourist market is not a sustainable strategy. Any aspect of culture that is good instills pride in local people. Culture needs to start with

local people, with local communities. It cannot start without facilities or activities, without volunteers or teachers. When it starts, it needs to be acknowledged.

- ❖ One weakness within the provision for culture is the lack of facilities for families to participate in culture together. Most provision is focused on target groups – the young, adults or the elderly. Given that the family is a strong aspect of Irish culture, facilities that encourage families to interact needs to be considered in the County Cultural Strategy.
- ❖ The lack of facilities for children also needs to be addressed. There are good facilities in the county (including the built heritage) but there is little that is innovative in the presentation of facilities that make them children and family friendly. Amenities need to stretch our imaginations.
- ❖ There are economic and quality of life benefits to culture which justify the resources provided to it by the local communities and the public purse. Quality of life is critical to attracting both people and industry into an area.
- ❖ The cultural area is quite fragmented. Much of it is driven by individuals and voluntary groups. There is a need for co-ordination. Is there merit in having specific officers, for example an Arts Officer, to support the co-ordination process for the different sectors in culture – arts, heritage, sports and recreation? Co-ordination is also required in the promoting and selling of aspects of culture – craft products, art, etc. The Rock of Cashel/Bru Boru center, the Craft Granary, the Mainguard project might all provide opportunities to address this co-ordination deficit. Consideration could be given for a major promotion theme in each of the main towns in South Tipperary.
- ❖ Our greatest strength can also be a weakness. Tipperary has a proud and strong hurling tradition. But the cultural strategy also needs to embrace minority sports.
- ❖ The level of participation and performance in the arts needs to be compared with other counties to assess the strength of the arts in South Tipperary.
- ❖ There is also a darker side to our culture. In some parts of the county, the pub may be the only social facility. While the pub culture reflects part of our friendliness and conviviality, alcoholism can affect the quality of life not just for the alcoholic but also for the family of the alcoholic.
- ❖ Culture is constantly evolving. What can be done to promote the culture of the present? Do the people of South Tipperary know the current greatest artists/performers? Yes in sport and music but what about literature, drama, painting culture, minority sports and recreation fields, etc. Also new cultures need to be acknowledged and accommodated, especially those being influenced by new technologies. The vision (to be adopted by the board in April) needs to focus on developing culture so that it can embrace new fields.
- ❖ Although culture is evolving, many aspects of culture can easily be lost. The culture associated with coalmining is disappearing. Snapnet fishing on the river Suir could be lost within ten years. Is our friendliness as a people in danger of being lost? Are social and community networks in danger of being lost because of the increasing requirements on all family members to work outside the home?

# **TIPPERARY (SOUTH RIDING) COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

## **REPORT OF THE CULTURAL WORKING GROUP MEETING**

February 26, 2000

Present - John Dalton (South Tipperary Voluntary Community Group Platform) Chair, Brendan Maher (South Tipperary Arts Centre), Ronnie Fitzgerald (Clonmel Community Partnership), Pat Holland (Tipperary (South Riding) County Council), Paul Grisewood (Tipperary Excel), Jim Myers (Regal Theatre Committee), David Teevan (Galloglass), Breda O'Connor (Community and Enterprise Section) and John Quinn (Director of Community and Enterprise)

Apologies - Anne Ryan (Tipperary (South Riding) County Enterprise Board), Ciaran Lynch (TRBDI), Una O'Murchu (Bru Boru), Lynda Phelan (The Place Performance Theatre)

### **Summary**

The cultural situation of South Tipperary could be described as a jigsaw that needs to be put together.

Many of the pieces to make up the jigsaw are in place. These need to be linked to each other by a coherent strategy. Central to that strategy is professional support for the co-ordination of the arts, heritage and sport. Missing pieces (gaps in infrastructure) need to be identified and a facility development strategy agreed for a generation (20 years).

There are three different types of customer who have a role in putting the jigsaw together. The first customers are the cultural stakeholders in the county (represented by the four sectors on the County Development Board). These stakeholders must deliver coherence and consensus on the way forward. The second set of customers are volunteers. Volunteers have a major role to play in the delivery of cultural activities. The changing nature of volunteerism needs to be understood and their needs, especially in getting recognition (qualifications and support) for the time given, are met. The third set of customers is the general population. The cultural sector needs to reach out to the general population in proven ways and in new innovative ways to enable its customers improve and enhance their quality of life.

The Working Group's perspective on the value that a County Cultural Strategy needs to add to the cultural situation of South Tipperary is:

- Professional backing at county level for culture
- An agreed facility development strategy (for a generation) which is attracting public resources
- An emphasis on enabling volunteers get more recognition (for the time spent) especially qualifications
- More emphasis on outreach activities in the resourcing of the cultural sector.

## **1. Review of Action Items from the November meeting, the Board Cultural Review of the County, the Board meeting on the Vision for the future**

The Cultural Working Group welcomed the Board's emphasis on quality of life issues, and its avoidance of a narrow economic perspective in its review of the County.

### **Stakeholders - Action items -**

- Breda O'Connor to put the list of 400 stakeholders on a data base
- All members of the Cultural Working Group requested to peruse the list of stakeholders and identify gaps in information received to date (list of practitioners is important to get right).

### **Identifying the other cultural assets/services**

There is general agreement that culture has an impact on quality of life. There is a need to revisit the indices that can prove/disprove the perceived value of culture. There is also a need to look at the indices around children's perceptual development.

### **Action Items:**

- ✓ Breda O'Connor - studies on physical and perceptual skills of young people (study from Professor Aine Hyland sourced and summary distributed - other sources brainstormed - Laois Teacher Training centre, Moll on Oige studies on disadvantaged youth, thesis by Ellen, NCVA initiatives with Cahir VTOS programme - Tina Looby), Mental Health Association - Joe Cunningham (SEHB), remedial teachers do an assessment of ability)
- Breda O'Connor to recirculate the Hyland study summary
- John Dalton - contact the Mental Health Association
- David Teevan to make information available on quality of life indicators arising from a pilot programme from the Arts Council involving Galloglass
- John Quinn to circulate information on the work done by the National Spatial Strategy Unit with regard to quality of life indicators
- Brendan Maher - Sourcing excellence in the arts
- Ronnie Fitzgerald - Sourcing excellence in the schools
- John Dalton - Sourcing excellence in sport
- Ann Ryan - identifying quality in products likely to be sold in country markets
- ✓ Breda O'Connor - Laois Co Sports Officer impact
- Brendan Maher - Limerick Co Arts Officer impact
- Brendan Maher to carry out a regional comparison of Arts Council funding into the South East
- ✓ Paul Grisewood to circulate the Excel Arts Statement
- ✓ Breda O'Connor - Kerry Irish and Cultural Officer impacts
- Ciaran Lynch - lessons from the LEDA methodology
- Brendan Maher - lessons from EU initiatives in culture and the media

**Summarising strategies** - For each strategy - brief summary - activities actions over 5-10 years, who is doing it, how much will it cost, when will it happen, is South Tipperary benefiting more, equal or less by comparison with other counties

### **Action Items**

- John Dalton - Ceolthas,
- Breda O'Connor
- Ronnie Fitzgerald - Community arts, partnerships

- ✓ Pat Holland - Local authority (SMI), National Heritage plan, Museum Development Plan
- Ciaran Lynch - Education and training
- ✓ Brendan Maher - Arts Council (5 year plan to 2002)
- ✓ Anne Ryan - Crafts Council
  - ✓ John Quinn - LEADER II, Regional Tourism (summaries distributed for Regional Tourist organisation and Co Tipperary Tourism Committee)

## **Expanding the Cultural Working Group**

A further three activists in the Performance Arts field had volunteered to join the Cultural Working Group – Lynda Phelan (The Place Performance Theatre), David Teevan (Galloglass) and Jim Myers (Regal Theatre Committee).

## **2. Review of the consultations**

Meeting reports on all four consultations had been circulated:

- ❖ Paul Grisewood reported that the challenge for the performance arts sector remains the same as it was in 1996 when an arts plan for South Tipperary was prepared – need for professional support in co-ordinating and providing information/guidance to the sector and the need for access to facilities
- ❖ Brendan Maher reported that while the visual arts are not as cohesive a group as the performance arts sector, there is concern that arts is consigned to the margin – a children’s activity or something useful to support social inclusion.
- ❖ Pat Holland stated that the priorities of the heritage sector were staff support, planning and access to finance. He noted that the issues relating to the ‘Irish language and ‘English as it is spoken in South Tipperary’ had not been addressed in these consultations.
- ❖ John Dalton flagged the major issue that 48% of Irish people do not engage in physical exercise and the emphasis on the consultative meeting in seeking to identify actions that could address that major issue. The role of volunteers needs further debate.
- ❖ John Quinn noted that the planning workshop had to be cancelled due to insufficient participants.

The following comments were added:

- ✓ There are major strategic changes in sport that need to be factored into the County Cultural Strategy. People are more aware of the need of fitting something healthy into their busy lifestyles. Golf has shifted from an elitist support to a more mass market. The additional facilities (many supported by EU initiatives in the 1990-1999 period) have been important. Another factor is that activities such as golf, walking, hill walking, suit the age groups looking for physical activity as they retire from team sports. More competitive active sports such as badminton and squash are in decline.
- ✓ The strategic change in sport has implications for the Cultural Working Group. Has the change been supply led (facilities/teachers) or demand led or a

combination of both? If it has been supply led, there are implications for the arts sector. There has also been a large take up in yoga and oriental arts. The current South Tipperary Tourism Marketing Plan has also focused on the promotion of activity pursuits.

- ✓ The debate on volunteerism, which is currently being facilitated by the South Tipperary Voluntary Community Group Platform, was welcomed. The profile of volunteers is changing. New volunteers are not prepared to volunteer for life – they volunteer for two to three years or for a specific task. The shorter time frame also reflects the changing pattern of how long people want to stay in jobs. Fewer people want to remain with the same employer for all their working life. Younger volunteers also want to get something out of volunteerism – a qualification, perhaps expenses.

### 3. Interim priorities to guide the work in preparing the County Cultural Strategy over the next months

The Cultural Working Group reviewed the draft work programme which had been agreed in September.

<b>Task</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Define Culture	No agreement – better understanding	Generic agreement on arts, heritage, sport and recreation
Base line data	Some information available on mapping system	Need to focus on data sets that will make or disprove the point on the priorities selected
Audit of Services	Only list of stakeholders available	Audit can wait until the information required from it is known
Audit of Strategies	Strategies made available	Need to revisit the Arts Plan in 1996 and especially the failure to bring the Co Council on board in relation to some of the key recommendations in the plan
Consultation with cultural interests	Postal questionnaire with stakeholders Specific consultative meetings held	Gaps in relation to Irish language, English as we speak it, consulting with children
Board Input into the Cultural Review of the County	Completed	Positive and helpful
SWOT analysis and recommendations of key indicators of change	On agenda for this meeting	
Prioritisation on key issues	On agenda for this meeting	
Consultation with key stakeholders on priorities	Most key stakeholders invited to this meeting	Sufficient representation present to submit priorities for consideration by the board
Presentation of the Cultural Working Group's report to the Board	Re-scheduled along with social and economic reports for April 2001	John Quinn to prepare from outcomes of this meeting and work completed to date

#### SWOT Review

<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Weaknesses</b>
More experience among key players in culture of outreach (especially supported by FAS schemes)	Previous efforts to co-ordinate Arts Sector in 1996 led to disillusionment – plan prepared but not accepted by key stakeholder

<p>Range of cultural excellence – sport, music, theatre, heritage, crafts, etc</p> <p>There are some good facilities already in the county</p> <p>Local community radio which can reflect the culture of its franchise area</p> <p>More evidence that culture enhances quality of life</p>	<p>No co-ordinated vision regarding culture</p> <p>The sector is fragmented with individual groups operating largely in darkness – not aware that others face same issues and that unity could be strength in dealing with public bodies. The survival of many new cultural groups contingent on luck.</p> <p>The quality of facilities varies throughout the county. Some facilities such as the Regal under threat. Others cannot be easily accessed (especially by children).</p> <p>Lack of dedicated professionals whose job is to co-ordinate arts, heritage, sport, etc in the county</p>
<p><b>Opportunities</b></p>	<p><b>Threats</b></p>
<p>The CDB can put the jigsaw together</p> <p>Agreement on a Facility Typology Strategy for county, sub county and community areas</p> <p>Get CDB consensus on the development of acceptable access strategies when public funding is given to any cultural facility</p> <p>Funding opportunities – Arts Council, Heritage Council, Irish sports Council, etc</p> <p>Promote, export and import excellence in culture</p>	<p>Local government and the public sector in South Tipperary may not take up the new opportunities to promote/advance culture in the county</p> <p>Focus of funding will remain on bricks and mortar rather than on the use of facilities</p> <p>Changes in lifestyles and the impact of mass media if the critical faculties of the South Tipperary population do not continue to be developed</p> <p>Danger of intervening too strongly and to find the balance between communication via the culture and communication about the culture.</p>

**Key indicators (that the County Cultural Strategy has brought about change)**

1. Professional backing for culture in the county. A model for the future development of culture would consist of a professional team that would include an arts officer, a heritage officer and a sports/leisure officer. The key indicator is the availability of professional officers for culture at county level.
2. 20 year facility development/restoration strategy in place that can sustainably meet the cultural needs of the county, its major sub-county centres and local communities. At county level, there needs to be top of the range purpose facilities (many likely to be located in Clonmel). At sub-county town level there is a need to ensure that a variety of cultural activity can be facilitated (smaller purpose facilities). At local community level, there is a need on a generation basis (20 years) to upgrade local community facilities – the

minimum would be a comfortable hall that can accommodate indoor cultural activities and a sportsfield that can accommodate outdoor cultural activities.

3. Qualifications and new skills of volunteers
4. Participation in cultural activity including numbers of outreach programmes.

### **Presentation of the Cultural Working Group's Report to the County Development Board**

The indicators reflect the Working Group's concerns that if the County Cultural Strategy is to make any difference, it must:

- build on the strengths (pieces of the jigsaw),
- address the weaknesses (jigsaw pieces are disjointed),
- optimise the opportunities (there is increasing empirical evidence that culture impacts on quality of life, there is more funding available and this funding needs to be directed strategically to professional backing/co-ordination, to facilities that are accessible and sustainable (appropriate level); to volunteer qualifications and to outreach activities that will increase participation in culture)
- minimise the threats by finding the right balance in communicating with the stakeholders (consensus on the way forward with all key stakeholders agreed and clear on strategies implementation; with the general population (activities that enhance critical faculties, visual awareness, appreciation of excellence and participation in culture.

### **4. Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Cultural Working Group will be held on Monday April 30, 2001 at 3.30 pm in the Training Room, County Hall, Clonmel.

# **TIPPERARY (SOUTH RIDING) COUNTY DEVELOPMENT BOARD**

## **REPORT OF THE CULTURAL WORKING GROUP MEETING**

June 25, 2001

Present - Anne Ryan (Tipperary (South Riding) County Enterprise Board), Brendan Maher (South Tipperary Arts Centre), Ronnie Fitzgerald (Clonmel Community Partnership), Pat Holland (Tipperary (South Riding) County Council), Paul Grisewood (Tipperary Excel), David Teevan (Galloglass), Kitty O'Sullivan and Breda O'Connor (Community and Enterprise Section) and John Quinn (Director of Community and Enterprise)

Apologies - John Dalton (South Tipperary Voluntary Community Group Platform) Ciaran Lynch (TRBDI), Jim Myers (Regal Theatre Committee), Una O'Murchu (Bru Boru), Lynda Phelan (The Place Performance Theatre)

### **Summary**

Sectoral strategies in Arts and Crafts will be available in 2001.

Members of the Cultural Working Group expressed concern about the danger of applying an economic marketing tool (brand name Tipperary) to a complex cultural topic (defining Tipperaryness). But there are some cultural benefits if the task can be successfully achieved and members agreed to co-operate with the Economic Working Group in refining 'Tipperaryness'.

The core task of a thorough cost-benefit analysis of the provision of professional services to culture was agreed as the main priority over the next months.

The Cultural Working Group supported the suggestion – a cultural team for the whole county if properly resourced could be the best way forward.

The Cultural Working Group suggested that the theme of sustaining voluntary activity be linked with the provision of outreach services.

Galloglass Theatre Company has agreed to run a public forum on July 14 in conjunction with Tipperary Institute on the theme. 'Are the Arts an essential ingredient of a healthy human diet?'

## **1. Review of the report from the February Cultural Working Group Meeting**

Ann Ryan reported that a crafts strategy for South Tipperary is almost finalised. The crafts strategy could be endorsed by the County Development Board.

Tipperary (South Riding) Co Council is in the process of selecting a consultant to carry out a review and recommendations (for the future) on the Council's arts strategy.

With a strategy in both the crafts and arts sector before the end of year, gaps in relation to a strategy for sport and a strategy for heritage should be addressed. The Co Council is recruiting a Heritage Officer, one of whose functions will be to prepare a heritage strategy. The Irish Sports Council is funding Local sports Partnership. An unsuccessful bid was co-ordinated by the Tipperary (South Riding) Vocational Educational Committee in 2001 but the basis for a strategic plan has been agreed with the main interests.

## **2. County Development Board Meeting Report**

The Working Group sought clarification on the role of the County Development Board is developing and overseeing the implementation of the County Strategy.

The task of the CDB is to facilitate the improvement in the delivery of services in the county. This involves co-ordination and getting the major stakeholders to state their position in relation to the scope of inter-agency activity that could enhance service delivery in their specific area of responsibility. An important output from the CDB process is that resources are targeted (perhaps in joint budgets) to meet agreed county priorities.

## **3. Defining the essence of Tipperaryness**

Members of the Cultural Working Group expressed concern with this task (arising from an economic strategy to get value from the Tipperary name). It may be dangerous to define Tipperary culturally. There is an economic benefit in branding if selling goods outside the area. 'It's a long way to Tipperary' is a well known song. But a cultural definition of 'Tipperaryness' is a complex task. There is a danger of applying an economic marketing tool to a complex topic. Some would argue that culture should grow organically and not be focused at a pre-ordained specific direction. Riverdance, whilst phenomenally successful, could also be construed as detrimental in creating an image as to how Ireland is perceived. However, there are major benefits to any promotional activity in increasing participation rates in cultural activities. If 'culture' is not a product, few people will associate with it.

Every county has different elements (landscape, arts, stories, dance, etc) but have these elements in different ways. There may be a need to focus on the elements where Tipperary has particular strengths. It is not that Tipperary is unique but the county has different proportions of these elements to other counties. For example – contrast Tipperary and Galway. Tipperary has a stronger hurling tradition. A considerable proportion of Co Galway is a Gaeltacht. Part of the definition of Tipperary is in its weaknesses as well as in its strengths.

An important denominator in Ireland is religion – through the ages. South Tipperary has a strong built heritage. Does that say something about our beliefs?

South Tipperary by location and also via strong urban centres has evolved a cosmopolitan culture. In some communities, economic realities kept people more closed in. There are differences within South Tipperary. The rural areas have not been exposed to as much variety in culture as the towns.

Looking at the county on its own may not be enough. Tipperary is part of Ireland. Ireland is part of the European Union. Tipperary is populated not just by people born in the county, but also by people from other counties and other countries. It could help those who choose to live in the county if there was a representation of the County's culture available to them.

The representation while embracing the past, needs to also include the present and the future. Ideally once the elements are agreed, it might be represented graphically.

The Cultural Working Group agreed that its members would liaise with members of the Economic Working Group to try and refine the essence of Tipperaryness. At a later stage a graphic artist might be asked to join the process.

#### **4. Professional Development of Culture**

Members of the Cultural Working Group welcomed the endorsement by the CDB of the professional development of culture theme and the comments of CDB member Pat Moroney on this theme.

The main challenge is to quantify the benefits of professional support to the sector. The Arts Council and the National Spatial Strategy Unit are having difficulty carrying out this task. It was recommended to review international best practice. Cultural Teams operate in Nottingham and in other parts of the UK. A second option may be to compare South Tipperary with say County Mayo where there has been an Arts Officer in place for more than 15 years.

Pat Moroney had posed the question as to whether a County Tipperary approach might be most appropriate regarding culture. The Cultural Working Group supported the suggestion – a cultural team for the whole county if properly resourced could be the best way forward. The entire county is large but members of the cultural team could be strategically located to ensure good coverage North and South. Again, it may assist to compare with a large UK county.

Cultural Working Group members agreed to individually assist the Director of Community and Enterprise as requested in progressing both tasks over the summer months. The core task of a thorough cost-benefit analysis of the provision of professional services to culture was agreed as the main priority over the next months.

## **5. Other CDB themes**

The Cultural Working Group suggested that the theme of sustaining voluntary activity be linked with the provision of outreach services. Part of the brief of all outreach services could include the support of community and voluntary activists. Volunteers need 'professionals' in their midst to carry some of the technical and administrative burden.

A key question is what are the triggers that are preventing potential volunteers from volunteering? What are the blockages? Can these blockages be overcome?

There may also be a need to develop structures to support innovative approaches – such as Institutional Volunteering (companies giving staff time off for voluntary activity).

The celtic tiger has brought lots of prosperity but there is also considerable loneliness. There is a greater need for voluntary services/activities in communities. An outreach approach may help but training especially in welcoming/recruiting members is also necessary. There is a need to challenge a culture sometimes evidenced in the community sector that is unwelcoming to new members and not conducive to officer change.

There is a need to access international best practice – the 'social capital' fora. One comment passed in recent times is: "Every hour you spend commuting to work, is one less hour that you give to your local community".

## **6. Further Consultation**

Galloglass Theatre Company has agreed to run a public forum on July 14 in conjunction with Tipperary Institute on the theme. 'Are the Arts an essential ingredient of a healthy human diet?' David Teevan circulated a briefing document on the public forum.