

# **Secretary's report for AGM 2017/18 on 10/01/19**

## **INTRODUCTION**

I am reporting on the period 1<sup>st</sup> Oct 2017-30<sup>th</sup> Sept 2018. As a board we believe our role as community representatives is to manage the Community Council and Little Voyagers in an open, honest and transparent manner and strive to enhance the lives of people in our community through the services we provide. We take our responsibility to manage finances very seriously and have stringent monitoring systems in place. We do our best to be good employers and to look after our staff well.

As you know the members of the board are all volunteers. We meet regularly to deal with ongoing issues and plan for the future. As well as board meetings there are regular meetings with the managers. We strive to have open communication and encourage the managers to raise matters with one or more of us early on so issues can be resolved as soon as possible.

We are just four people working on behalf of the community. We welcome involvement from others and would encourage anyone to get in touch if they have ideas or suggestions that would enhance the work we would. A place on the board is open to all. We would happily welcome new people to the board.

Before I outline what happened in the reporting period I wish to thank our staff team for their on-going support which has allowed us to improve the Centre, the village and the services we provide to the Community. I'd like to thank our Centre Manager Pat Murphy and his team for all their hard work in keeping the Centre and the village looking well and providing a good service. I'd also like to thank our childcare Tara O'Halloran Quirke and her team for helping to build and expand Little Voyagers. Bernie Kearney is often the first person people have contact with and her warm, helpful manner is a huge asset to us all. She does great work in for the Seniors Committee and has been pivotal in providing new experiences for the group.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

On behalf of the board I must acknowledge the support we receive from those who have volunteered their time and talents to the Centre to run our weekly bingo. It would be very difficult to run this event without their help. Thank you very much to those individuals, we really do appreciate your assistance. A special thanks to Tommy Long who helps out most bank holidays.

Special thanks must go to Grainne Kavanagh, with the assistance of Jeremiah Clifford, for their work for many years in brightening up the village at Christmas. The village looks so well at Christmas largely due to Grainne

## **LITTLE VOYAGERS**

Our childcare service has been doing well and demand for places is high. I believe this is due to our good reputation, the credit for which goes to the childcare team.

Recruiting and retaining staff in this sector is a national issue. We value our staff and strive to provide a happy work environment. We gave all staff a pay rise this year which they richly deserved.

GDPR (**General Data Protection Regulation**) came into force in May 2018. **GDPR** is a regulation that requires businesses to protect the personal data and privacy of citizens. In order to comply with GDPR it was important that all child-related information was protected and to do this the childcare manager needed a private office. Work on this was completed just before Christmas. Childcare areas now are exclusively used for childcare services only.

This year we hired a company to update all our P&P documents to ensure we complied with GDPR. We also invested in a new online record keeping system for childcare which is proving popular with staff and parents alike.

**Santa's Grotto:** For the last number of Christmases Santa's Grotto has run in conjunction with the Christmas market. This has proved to be successful so we anticipate that we will continue with this arrangement. A huge amount of work goes into this event and great credit is due to the staff of Little Voyagers.

**Halloween Disco:** For years now, the staff of Little Voyagers has run a disco and party at Halloween. The staff volunteer their time and all income raised is put back into the service.

## **COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**GYM closure:** We had been concerned about the declining use of the gym for some time. Efforts were made by Pat to increase numbers but to no avail. We had very few people using the gym and during the summer we had less. We made the decision to close the gym as we needed office space for Pat as he could no longer share an office with the childcare manager due to GDPR. We also needed space for a staff room and an additional meeting room for groups such as Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann, the Ardfert Singers and the youth club.

We sold the equipment and invested the money made in putting in a kitchenette and furnishing the room.

## **IMPROVEMENTS IN CENTRE and elsewhere 2017/2018**

Mural by the Youth Club: The entrance hallway was enhanced and brightened by a mural done by the youth club at the start of 2018.

Online booking system: This was introduced in October. We hope it makes it easier for people to book our facilities.

Walnut Grove: This is no longer being used as groups are mainly using An Fearann but we continue to maintain it. During the development of An Fearann it is likely to be used again.

### **SUBCOMMITTEES:**

**Ardfert Historical Society:** We were glad to welcome this newly formed group under our umbrella in 2018. Being a subcommittee will benefit them when applying for grants.

**An Fearann:** Ardfert Community Council signed a 99 year lease with Kerry County Council for the lands at An Fearann in January 2018. The lands available to us comprise just over 7 acres. We are planning to build a GAA pitch, a soccer pitch, athletics track, a walking track and a community hall that can be used by everyone in the community.

The subcommittee is made up of representatives from all the sporting organisations in the village and 2 members of our board. A lot of work has been done by this group. An application to the Sports capital Grant was made in October for phase 1 which is a GAA pitch and a walking track.

Ardfert Community Council has agreed to fund the cost of hiring an architect to draw plans for the development and submit for planning permission. A public consultation will take place once those drawings are complete.

The subcommittee will apply for any grants available but a lot of fundraising will need to be done.

### **SENIORS**

Ardfert/Kilmoyley Senior Citizens Group continues to meet every Tuesday in the Community Centre and is open to all and they are happy to see new people join. The numbers attending have increased and we are very happy to see more men joining. The food provided by the chef Joe Dalton is of a very high standard. A new oven was purchased in January 2018 with funding from the HSE.

Great credit is due to the seniors' committee who give of their time so generously. Thanks also to Gina Kelly from the HSE for her ongoing support. I previously mentioned Bernie Kearney's invaluable contribution. I also wish to acknowledge the contribution made by Hilary Tobin who has a particular interest in this committee and improving the experience of those attending.

Thank you for your attention.

I'll now hand you over to Hilary for an update on progress of the Fair Green subcommittee.

Barbara O'Grady

Secretary

Ardfert Community Council CLG

## Ardfert Village Green

RE: Part VIII-Ardfert Public Toilet Facility

The Part VIII Process, in accordance with the Planning and Development Regulations 2001-2018 to construct a new public toilet facility, new services and associated site works in the 'Fairgreen', Ardfert, Tralee, Co. Kerry, commenced Thursday 16th August 2018.

All plans and particulars were available for inspection or purchase from Friday 17th August 2018 to Friday 14th September 2018 at the following locations:

Kerry County Council, Tralee Municipal District Office, Princes Street, Tralee, County Kerry,

Kerry County Council website <http://www.kerrycoco.ie>

Ardfert Community Council also displayed a copy of all plans and particulars in Ardfert Community Centre during this period.

All submissions were to be received on or before 5.00 p.m. on Friday, 28th September 2018

There were numerous submissions received and it was decided on 5<sup>th</sup> November that it would be pulled from the Municipal District meeting. We were told by Cllr. T. Ferris that planning process for the new location at the back of Mrs Mc Crohans would start immediately to be voted on in January. The funding was extended to Oct 2019.

In December we were told that the application was with the National Monuments Services seeking approval for the revised location.

Kerry County Councils archaeologist who was making the application to the Dept. was of the opinion the application may not be successful due to the proximity to the Cathedral. Therefore to prevent any risk, the part 8 process would not commence until approval from the NMS is obtained.

On Monday the 7<sup>th</sup> of January we were notified by Cllr. T Ferris that the license had been received from OPW and that the Part VIII Process would commence immediately and that hopefully planning would be in place by March/ April.

Hilary Tobin

Chair

Fair Green Subcommittee