

Meeting of the Expert Advisory Group on Commemorations

Monday, 6th March 2017, from 1.15pm to 3.00 pm
Room 303, Department of the Taoiseach
Minutes

Attendees:

Dr Maurice Manning (Chair)
Dr Martin Mansergh (Vice Chair)
Dr. Sandra Collins
Professor Mary Daly
Dr Mary Harris
Mr Jerry Kelleher (D/Taoiseach)
Ms Orlaith Lochrin (D/AHRRGA)
Comdt. Stephen MacEoin
Ms Sinead McCoole
Mr Feargal Ó Coigligh (D/AHRRGA)
Professor Eunan O'Halpin
Dr Éamon Phoenix

Apologies:

Mr Francis Devine
Mr Gabriel Doherty
Ms Miriam Dollard (D/Taoiseach)
Professor Diarmaid Ferriter
Dr. Leeann Lane
Mr Kevin Lonergan (D/AHRRGA)

Key Points:

The minutes of the previous meeting (13th February) were approved and there were no issues arising.

The death of the former SDLP MLA P.J. Bradley was noted and his important contribution to the work of the Oireachtas All-Party Consultation Committee on Commemorations was acknowledged.

The draft Second Statement of Principles document was further considered. The document, when finalised, will be brought to Government and the Secretary will advise the group of the next steps required in this process.

The Group reviewed the list of key historical events circulated at the meeting and agreed on a draft listing of events to be marked in some format by the State in 1917 and 1918. Events will be either 'State led' or 'State supported'. It was agreed that the Secretary will circulate the draft list after this meeting. Preliminary discussions will continue at the next meeting concerning events to be marked by the State between 2019 and 2022.

Proposals to mark the centenary of the death of Thomas Ashe in September are still under consideration and the recommendations of the Group in this regard will be noted.

Preliminary discussions took place around the commemoration of the War of Independence and the Civil War. It was proposed that it may not be appropriate or feasible for the State to commemorate individual events at local level. An alternative option may be for a significant State led ceremonial event to take place, with a focus on reconciliation. Recommendations around the State's approach to the commemoration of this period will be considered further at the next meeting.

It was proposed that the group could usefully suggest particular themes for commemoration, in addition to specific historical events. This will be considered further.

The group considered themes that might be proposed for inclusion in the 2018/2019 commemorative stamp programme, including John Redmond and the convening of the first Dáil.

It was proposed that the next meeting of the group will take place on 25th April (to be confirmed).

Ends.