

Virtual Meeting of the Expert Advisory Group on Centenary Commemorations

Tuesday, 19th October 2021 at 1.15 pm

Minutes

Attendees:

Dr Maurice Manning (*Chair*)
Dr Martin Mansergh (*Deputy Chair*)
Dr Sandra Collins
Professor Mary Daly
Mr Francis Devine
Dr Anne Dolan
Professor Diarmaid Ferriter
Professor Patrick Geoghegan
Dr Mary Harris
Mr Jerry Kelleher
Comdt. Stephen MacEoin
Dr Sinéad McCooile
Dr William Murphy
Professor Eunan O'Halpin
Dr Éamon Phoenix
Ms Sinéad Copeland *D/TCAGSM*
Ms Muirne Lyons *D/TCAGSM*
Ms Orlaith Lochrin *D/TCAGSM*
Ms Pauline Kiernan *D/Taoiseach*

Guest Attendees:

Ross Keane, *Director, Irish Film Institute*
Kasandra O'Connell, *Head of IFI Irish Film Archive*

Apologies:

Mr Gabriel Doherty
Dr Leeann Lane
Mr Conor Falvey *D/TCAGSM*

Key Points:

The Chair welcomed Kasandra O'Connell and Ross Keane from the Irish Film Institute, who outlined proposals for a very engaging and interesting commemorative programme focusing on the depiction of the Struggle for Independence and the Civil War on film. The proposals were endorsed by the Group, particularly in light of the potential for broad public engagement, including potential outreach to local archives and libraries around the country. The Department (D/TCAGSM) is also very supportive of the plans and invited the IFI to submit a detailed proposal to the Department for consideration.

The minutes of the previous meeting (12th August) were agreed and there were no matters arising.

The Department (D/TCAGSM) gave an update regarding the development of the 2022 Decade of Centenaries Programme, confirming that Minister Martin has approved a current budget allocation of €5 million – maintaining funding levels for next year on par with this year's significantly increased allocation. It is also envisaged that the support for local authorities under the Community

Strand of the programme will continue next year. An overview was provided to the Group of the commemorative programme, which was published in early September, to mark the centenary of the events leading up to the signing of the Anglo-Irish Treaty.

The Department of the Taoiseach provided an update to the Group concerning plans for a State commemoration to mark the centenary of the Civil War and welcomed any suggestions and ideas from the Group.

The Department (D/TCAGSM) gave an update regarding plans for the new bursary scheme. In line with the advice of the Group, the scheme will focus on encouraging new local research and local history studies – it is intended that all of the research published under this scheme will be made freely accessible to the public. The Royal Irish Academy is very supportive and has agreed to lead the delivery of the scheme, with appropriate support and funding from the Department.

Dr Mary Harris provided an update to the Group regarding plans for a conference next April, to be hosted by NUI Galway in partnership with Elaine Martin and Patrick Nevin, arising from their presentation to the Group in February. The Department invited NUI Galway to submit a proposal, including estimated costings and funding required.

The Chair provided an update to the Group regarding the forthcoming one day conference on Friday, 5th November, ‘*Experiences of Border Minority Communities - Historical Perspectives*’, hosted by Monaghan County Museum. He thanked the members of the Group for their work and input into the development of the conference programme.

Under AOB, the Group was invited to reflect on potential ideas for the 2024 programme of commemorative stamps – suggestions would be very much appreciated and can be submitted via email to Muirne/Orlaith in the Commemorations Unit.

A discussion took place concerning the forthcoming service of reflection and hope, which is organised by the leaders of the main Christian churches for 21st October in the Church of Ireland Cathedral in Armagh. It was noted that the Expert Advisory Group has no role in matters arising concerning this event. The Group’s role, as set out in its Initial Statement (published in 2012), is to provide advice to the Government on historical matters when invited to do so, in a spirit of public service and independent of any political views, agendas, or influence. Individual members are also free to express ideas or views in a personal professional capacity and these should not be taken as representing the views of the Group.

Date of next meeting to be confirmed, subsequently scheduled for 7th December.

Ends.