

Meeting of the Expert Advisory Group on Commemorations

Tuesday, 20th November 2018, 1.15 pm
Room 301, Department of the Taoiseach
Minutes

Attendees:

Dr Maurice Manning (*Chair*)
Dr Martin Mansergh (*Vice Chair*)
Dr Sandra Collins
Professor Mary Daly
Mr Francis Devine
Mr Gabriel Doherty
Professor Diarmaid Ferriter
Professor Patrick Geoghegan
Dr Mary Harris
Comdt. Stephen MacEoin
Professor Eunan O'Halpin
Dr Éamon Phoenix

Mr Feargal Ó Coigligh *D/CHG*
Mr Conor Falvey *D/CHG*
Ms Orlaith Lochrin *D/CHG*
Mr Rónán Whelan *D/CHG*
Mr Jerry Kelleher *D/Taoiseach*

Guest Attendees:

Mr Derek Dignam, Houses of the Oireachtas

Apologies:

Dr. Leeann Lane
Ms Sinéad McCooile
Mr Kevin Lonergan *D/CHG*

Key Points:

The minutes of the previous meeting (28th May) were agreed and there were no issues arising.

The Chair advised that the report setting out the Group's most recent guidance to the Government has been completed and was presented to Minister Madigan in July for consideration. It was noted that a Memorandum for the Government has been prepared and is currently under consideration by relevant Government Departments. It was agreed that the Expert Advisory Group will continue to have a significant contribution to make over the remainder of the Decade of Centenaries.

The members of the Expert Advisory Group were invited to submit any observations that they may wish to make regarding An Post's programme of commemorative and special stamps for 2021. Arrangements will be made to brief the Group regarding plans for the 2020 programme.

The Chair advised that he has spoken with the Bishop of Cork, Cloyne and Ross, the Right Reverend Dr Paul Colton, and he plans to meet with Dr Colton.

The Chair referenced the important role of the National Cultural Institutions over the remainder of the Decade of Centenaries and the Expert Advisory Group will be happy to assist and support them in this work where appropriate. It was noted that the most recent guidance of the Group will be helpful to these and many other stakeholders, including local authorities, who are considering and developing plans. Collaboration and communication between and across stakeholders will support a joined-up approach to navigating the period ahead.

Derek Dignam provided the Group with an overview of the Houses of the Oireachtas commemorative programme to mark the centenary of the convening of Dáil Éireann on 21st January.

D/CHG advised that the guidance of the Advisory Group will inform the Government's approach to the remembrance of the centenary of the Soloheadbeg Ambush, generally regarded as the opening engagement in the Struggle for Independence.

The recent announcement (17th November) by the Minister for Education Joe McHugh T.D. that he is reviewing the decision to make history an optional subject in the Junior Certificate Curriculum was welcomed. It was agreed that the Chair would write to the Minister to express the Group's appreciation in this regard.

Tuesday, 5th February 2019, is proposed for the next meeting of the Advisory Group.

Ends.