Fingal County Council have formally adopted an Arts Plan for 2019-2025 that seeks to enable all in Fingal to access a wide range of arts and cultural experiences, to foster diversity of arts practice and to support artists of many different backgrounds.

Four key objectives feature in the plan, which was approved at the Fingal County Council Meeting in Swords on Monday last (January 14).

“Making Space for Art” will be achieved through developing creative spaces and environments. “Connecting People and Ideas” involves building relationships amongst organisations and individual artists. “Enabling Excellence” involves supporting artists through grants, awards and bursaries. Finally, “Developing Our Capacity” entails resourcing the Arts Office to effectively carry out its objectives.
Fingal Arts Officer Rory O’Byrne said: “Our primary wish is to grow Fingal’s cultural capacity by retaining and attracting creative practitioners to live and work in Fingal. This will ensure culture continues to play a central role in people’s lives and contribute in a positive way to building an inclusive and vibrant Fingal.”

An important aspect of the plan is supporting the development of spaces where arts and culture can develop and thrive. Director of Community and Housing Margaret Geraghty said: “This plan is a very strong statement of intent on behalf of Fingal in relation to arts and arts development over the next number of years. It supports our vision for the Swords Cultural Quarter as well as the development of the Seamus Ennis Arts Centre and Draiocht and the range of other arts providers in the county.”

The Swords Cultural Quarter will benefit from a significant investment involving a state-of-the-art library, an arts centre with theatre, rehearsal and multi-use spaces, and animation of the external environment. The Balbriggan Socio-Economic Strategy will also be supported.

Mayor of Fingal Cllr Anthony Lavin said: “With the Fingal population expected to rise to 330,000 by 2021 it is more important than ever that we cultivate the arts and ensure their place in the lives of all our citizens. By doing so, we create a strong, vibrant, confident community and a county which people want to live in, work in and visit.”

Chief Executive of Fingal Paul Reid said: “Fingal is recognised for its commitment to the arts, close support of professional and amateur artists, and for the quality and imagination of its art and arts provision reaching across people, place and practice. This investment is evidence, if any is needed, of our commitment to the arts and of our understanding of the powerful and empowering role the arts can play in a community.”

ENDS

Picture caption: The Swords Cultural Quarter is a major part of Fingal County Council’s newly approved Arts Plan.