

# The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

680<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting

70 Merrion Square

Wednesday 25 February 2015 at 11:00-17.30

## **Present:**

Sheila Pratschke Chairman, Aibhlín McCrann Deputy Chairman, Eimear O'Connor, Joan Sheehy, Ciarán Walsh, Judith Woodworth, Miriam Dunne, John Fanning, John McAuliffe, Brian Maguire (left at 2pm), Monica Spencer(from 2.45pm).

## **In attendance:**

Orlaith McBride *Director*, Martin O'Sullivan *Finance Director & Company Secretary*.

## **Documents before the meeting**

Agenda

Minutes of Meeting held on 10-12 December

Minutes of Meeting held on 3 February

Touring Round 2 2015

Touring Advance Planning 2016

2016 Programme

Directors Report

Programme Activity Fund

## **15 – 02 – 008 Apologies**

John O'Donnell, Mark O'Regan.

## **15 – 02 – 009 Chairman's Introduction**

*Conflicts of Interest*

The Chair **noted** that members had already declared conflicts in respect of decisions before the meeting but took the opportunity to re-emphasise the need for members to be absolutely clear that they were not conflicted with any other matter before the meeting.

The Chair confirmed that Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for the Diaspora, would be joining the meeting at 4.30pm and that John Coolahan, Professor Emeritus of Education, NUI Maynooth has been asked to attend the March Plenary meeting.

## **15 – 02 – 010 Minutes of the Plenary Meeting: 10-12 December 2014**

The Minutes of the 10-12 December Plenary meeting were **approved**.

## **15 – 02 – 011 Minutes of the Plenary Meeting: 3 February 2015**

*15 – 02 – 005 National Programme for 2016-National Choral Project*-Members agreed that the minute should read '*Members **agreed** the approach asking that the detailed budget be brought back for review.*'



The Minutes of the 3 February Plenary meeting were **approved**.

### **15 – 02 – 012 Matters arising from the Minutes**

Members **noted** that there were no matters arising from the minutes.

### **15 – 02 – 013 Touring Round 2 2015 & Advance Planning 2016**

Stephanie O'Callaghan, Arts Director, Liz Meaney, Arts Director, Val Ballance, Head of Venues, David Parnell, Head of Theatre and Kevin Healy (Touring Minutes) all joined the meeting.

Liz Meaney, Arts Director confirmed that a pilot scoring system had been used for this funding round and took the opportunity to thank Val Ballance for his work on the pilot and offered Members the opportunity of an additional workshop on the scoring system if required.

Val Ballance, Arts Manager reminded Members that the round was open to tours taking place in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

Members were presented with the budgetary approach used and it was recommended that Council should consider piloting strategic budgeting in touring for Round 2 2016. Following a detailed discussion Members **agreed** to the proposal and **agreed** that recommendations on how to approach strategic budgeting should be brought to Council for approval.

Members were provided with a high-level overview on the workings of the pilot scoring system. Members **noted** and welcomed its introduction. Members **agreed** that going forward marks should be limited to five choices i.e. 1-5 only. Members **agreed** that feedback from scoring should also be provided and that applicants need to be made aware of their vulnerability to the scoring system if they fail to complete applications correctly.

Members **agreed** that in future the scoring matrix for each recommendation should directly follow the recommendation text.

#### *Circus*

Davide Terlingo, Head of Circus, joined the meeting and briefed Members on recommendations. Members **agreed** the recommendation which is set out in an appendix to the minutes.

#### *Dance*

Davide Terlingo, Head of Dance, joined the meeting and briefed Members on recommendations. Members **agreed** the recommendation which is set out in an appendix to the minutes.

#### *Film*

Fionnuala Sweeney, Head of Film, joined the meeting and briefed Members on the recommendation. Members **agreed** the recommendation which is set out in an appendix to the minutes.

Fionnuala Sweeney also briefed Members on the launch of the 2016 Dublin Film Festival confirming that the Arts Council's support was hugely welcomed and also that there was significant interest from potential sponsors for the festival. Members **noted** the update.

#### *Music*

Liz Meaney, Arts Director, briefed Members on the recommendations. Members **agreed** the recommendations which are set out in an appendix to the minutes.

Members **agreed** that the letter of offer to Chamber Choir Ireland should reference a need for additional clarification regarding the budget for the tour.

### *Advance Planning Music*

Liz Meaney, Arts Director briefed Members on the recommendations. Members **agreed** the recommendation which is set out in an appendix to the minutes.

### *Traditional Arts*

Paul Flynn, Head of Traditional Arts, joined the meeting and briefed Members on recommendations. Members **agreed** the recommendations which are set out in an appendix to the minutes.

### *Literature*

Liz Powell, Acting Head of Literature, joined the meeting and briefed Members on recommendations.

John McAuliffe, Council Member, declared a conflict with Gallery Press and left the meeting in advance of discussion on this recommendation.

Members **agreed** the recommendations which are set out in an appendix to the minutes.

### *Visual Arts*

Claire Doyle, Head of Visual Arts, joined the meeting and briefed Members on recommendations.

Miriam Dunne, Council Member, declared a conflict with Anne Cleary and left the meeting in advance of discussion on this recommendation.

Members **agreed** the recommendations which are set out in an appendix to the minutes.

Roscommon Arts Centre Tour-Members **noted** that the 'target audience' figure for The Model should read '3,000'.

### *Advance Planning Visual Arts*

Claire Doyle, Head of Visual Arts, briefed Members on recommendations.

Eimear O'Connor, Council Member, declared a conflict with the Regional Cultural Centre and left the meeting in advance of discussion on this recommendation.

Members **agreed** the recommendation which is set out in an appendix to the minutes.

### *Theatre*

David Parnell, Head of Theatre, briefed Members on the recommendations apart from Gúna Nua for which he declared a conflict and left the meeting in advance of discussion on the recommendation.

Judy Woodworth, Council Member, declared a conflict with Blue Raincoat, Eimear O'Connor, Council Member, declared a conflict with Moonfish Theatre and John Fanning, Council Member, declared a conflict with Rough Magic. All Members left the meeting in advance of discussion on each conflicted recommendation.

Members **agreed** the recommendations which are set out in an appendix to the minutes.

### *Advance Planning Theatre*

David Parnell, Head of Theatre, briefed Members on recommendations. Members **agreed** the recommendation which is set out in an appendix to the minutes.

### **15 – 02 – 014 2016 Programme**

Liz Meaney, Arts Director, briefed Members on the further development of the national programme for 2016. Members welcomed the update.

In relation to the proposed wording for the 'Open Call', Members **agreed** a number of textual changes. Members **agreed** that the application process needs to be open to both single and multi-disciplinary applications for ambitious projects which can be realised in a range of scales from large to small.

In relation to the Selection Panel, members **agreed** that it should consist of five members comprising two Arts Council Members and three external members (two of which should be non-residents). It was also **agreed** that the Selection Panel Chair would be the Chair of the Arts Council. The Chair **agreed** to write to Members to ask for their expression of interest to be on the Panel.

Members were briefed on the initial long list of suggestions for possible international panellists. Members **agreed** that any other names to be added to or deleted from the list to be notified back to the Director by 1pm on 26 February.

In relation to project management, Members **agreed** to procure an overall resource for the 2016 Programme and secondly a specific resource for the *National Choral Project* should also be procured. In relation to the project management fee it was also **agreed** that it should be subdivided into the related elements of the Programme.

In relation to *Artists' Bursaries* the 16 X 16 proposal was welcomed. Members **noted** that applications need to attract emerging artists and should be open to all artforms. Members also **agreed** that the bursary recipients should be afforded the opportunity to participate in a group residency with appropriate provision made in the budget. It was **agreed** to progress a booking in this regard. It was also **agreed** that provision should be made for documentation of the residencies.

Members **agreed** that the selection panel for *Artists' Bursaries* should include a combination of Council Members and external Panel Members.

Members **agreed** that the 2016 Programme brief needed to be rewritten and circulated to all Members for quick approval.

It was **agreed** that Members would be circulated with a timeline of key dates for the Programme.

Members **noted** the importance of branding and the need to ensure that the Department (DAHG) is fully across all communications in advance of publication. Members were informed that the executive is in constant communications with John Concannon and DAHG. Members also **agreed** that a working title needs to be agreed for the Programme.

Members **noted** that a detailed communications plan is in place for the Programme across a range of media platforms.

### **15 – 02 – 015 Director's Report**

#### *Dundalk Institute of Technology – New Body Nominations*

Members were informed that Dundalk Institute of Technology had written to the Arts Council seeking nominations (both male and female) for the new Body. Members **agreed** that a panel of individuals should be provided to Dundalk Institute of Technology to allow them to make the selection.

#### *Council Performance Review*

Members **agreed** that a third party consultant should be procured to undertake its annual performance review.

#### *Aosdána voting and regulation changes*

Li Powell, Registrar, joined the meeting and briefed Members on three motions requiring Arts Council approval:

1. Motion to amend discipline ballot voting system
2. Motion to amend the new member voting system at the General Assembly
3. Motion to amend standing order 1.1.3 re emergency motions

Following a detailed discussion the motions were **approved**.

Members **noted** that President Michael D Higgins will be attendance at the Aosdána General Assembly on 7 March 2015 and that all Members are welcome to attend.

#### *Arts Council/Abbey Theatre Working Group*

Ciaran Walsh, Council Member, updated Members on a positive meeting of the Working Group confirming that the proposed evaluation and monitoring system is now agreed, a financial reporting template is now in place and a reprioritised Abbey programming policy and new operating model for the Peacock are being examined by the Board of the Abbey Theatre. Members **noted** the update.

#### *Arts Council and Local Government*

Members were updated on the reconvened Management Liaison Group and the Working Group that has been established to develop a draft MOU between the Arts Council and the CCMA. This MOU will be presented to the Liaison Group for final approval before being discussed by the respective Governing Bodies of both Agencies.

Members **noted** and welcomed the positive update.

#### *Update on Collection Policy*

Members **noted** that Lesley-Ann Hayden has been retained to undertake work in the development of a policy for the Collection.

#### *Update on Darklight Festival*

Members were informed that Darklight Festival had not submitted a revised proposal as requested and therefore a funding recommendation will not be brought to Council in relation to funding Darklight in 2015-16. Members **noted** the update.

It was **agreed** that the money should be reallocated to Film Projects Round 2.

#### *Peer Panels Project*

Members **noted** the update.

#### *Diary Report*

Members **noted** the Report.

### *Rough Magic Meeting*

John Fanning, Council Member, declared a conflict and left the meeting. The Director updated Members on a very positive meeting with Rough Magic confirming that they are not appealing their grant decision. Members **noted** and welcomed the outcome.

### **15 – 02 – 016 Reports**

#### *North / South Working Group Meeting January 29*

The Chair briefed members on a positive meeting confirming that the following matters were discussed:-

- The recent reduction of the ACNI budget by the Assembly;
- Confirmation that the joint Plenary meeting will be held in Dublin on May 20 and the next Working Group meeting will be in September;
-  It was **agreed** that a proposal will be progressed jointly by both Executives and brought to the Joint Plenary for further discussion;
- Discussion on Touring & Scoring;
- Update on funding of joint funded organisations for 2015;
- Arts Audiences update.

Members **noted** and welcomed the update.

#### *Policy & Strategy Committee Meeting 24 February*

Eimear O'Connor, Committee Chair, updated Members as follows on decisions made:-

- To develop a new strategy for the Arts Council;
- To take the framing of that new strategy as an opportunity to demonstrate leadership in the development of the arts in Ireland;
- The strategy to be guided by a long-term vision for the arts and to set out long-term, medium-term and short-term strategic goals;
- The internal process for developing the plan to be centred in the Policy and Strategy Committee which will report to Plenary. Regular meetings of P&S will determine the direction and content of the strategy. Membership (in particular Éimear O'Connor as Chair of P&S) and Executive (in particular Martin Drury as Director of Strategic Development) will work together between meetings to maintain momentum and other members (John McAuliffe in particular) will provide editorial advice and expertise so as to ensure clarity in the documentation being tabled at meetings;
- The strategy document will be clear and intelligible to a general audience and to that end an external editor is likely to be required prior to publication of the strategy;
- To discuss at the next meeting of the Policy and Strategy Committee the matters of (i) the Arts Council as development agency for the arts; and (ii) the individual artist.

Members sought additional clarity on the internal process and it was clarified that the Executive would work with Éimear O'Connor on the process between Policy and Strategy meetings. This

process will be led out through the Strategic Development Department (SDD) with the Director and other senior management working closely with SDD.

Members **agreed** the report and recommendations of the Policy & Strategy Committee.

#### *Business & Finance Committee Meeting Monday 24 February*

Ciaran Walsh, Committee Chair, updated Members as follows:-

- The minutes of the meeting held on the 8 December 2014 were approved;
- Management Accounts 2014 were approved;
- Approved review of T&T demand award by artform for 2014 and report findings to next B&F meeting;
- High-level Budget 2015 update approved;
- Approved review as to how high level initiatives (currently focused towards Literature and Visual Arts) might be used to benefit other art forms / practice areas;
- Committee Performance Report for 2014 was approved;
- Workplan 2015 was approved;
- Trusts Management Proposal approved;
- Agreed to put original Trust Consolidation and Investment Proposal up on Board Pad;
- Approved proposal to proceed with a series of governance seminar(s) (including consideration of live streaming / pod casting) and to develop full proposal for the next B&F meeting;
- Property update noted;
- HR update noted;- Members specifically referenced the continuing risk around staff welfare with SM / Managers covering vacant roles;
- FOI Report noted;
- ICT update noted;- the increased risk arising from the vacant Infrastructure Manager position was highlighted ;
- DAHG Grant Letter noted;
- New procurement resource noted.

Members **agreed** the report and recommendations of the Business & Finance Committee.

#### **15 – 02 – 017 Awards**

##### *Programme Activity Fund*

Joan Sheehy, Panel Chair, updated Members confirming the panel process as being really stimulating and that the panel of five worked really well. Members were also informed of a significant gap between those funded and not funded and that some established organisations submitted poor applications. Members were also informed that there were no panel conflicts.

Members **noted** the decisions and an appendix of the recommendations is attached to the Minutes.

It was **agreed** that the application deficit matter should be communicated to those organisations affected.

##### *Pallas Studios – Reconvened Panel*

Members **noted** the panel decision to award €16,000 to Pallas Studios.

#### **15 – 02 – 018 Communications Presentation**

Sean MacCarthaigh, PR and Communications Director, joined the meeting and made a presentation to Members.

Members **noted** and welcomed the presentation and it was **agreed** that it should be added to the Reading Room on Board Pad.

### **15 – 02 – 019 Any Other Business**

*Jimmy Deenihan TD, Minister for the Diaspora.*

Minister Deenihan was welcomed by the Chair and introduced to all Members. In a wide ranging discussion the Minister highlighted Cultural Connection- Ireland with the Diaspora and confirmed to Members that a new Diaspora Policy had just been approved by Cabinet covering matters such as a Colleges Fund (targeted at alumni connections), Global Irish Network, Global Civic Forum and an Inspire Ireland website.

The Chair and Members thanked the Minister for his attendance.

#### *Summary of decisions/actions*

- *Minutes of the Plenary Meeting: 10-12 December 2014-* were **approved**;
- *Minutes of the Plenary Meeting: 3 February 2015-* were **approved**;
- *Touring Round 2 2015 & Advance Planning 2016-* Members approved the recommendations;
- *Strategic budgeting in touring for Round 2 2016-* Members **agreed** to the proposal and **agreed** that recommendations on how to approach strategic budgeting should be brought to Council for approval;
- *Pilot scoring system-* Members **agreed** that going forward marks should be limited to five choices i.e.1-5 only. Members **agreed** that feedback from scoring should also be provided and that applicants need to be made aware of their vulnerability to the scoring system if they fail to complete applications correctly. Members also **agreed** that in future the scoring matrix for each recommendation should directly follow the recommendation text;
- *2016 Programme -* Members **agreed** proposed programme and approach together with governance and operational protocols –see detail above;
- *Dundalk Institute of Technology – New Body Nominations-* Members **agreed** that a panel of individuals should be provided to Dundalk Institute of Technology to allow them to make the selection
- *Council Performance Review-* Members **agreed** that a third party consultant should be procured to undertake its annual performance review;
- *Aosdána voting and regulation changes-* were **approved**;
- *Update on Darklight Festival-* Noted intention not to recommend funding for 2015/16. It was **agreed** that the money should be reallocated to Film Projects Round 2;
- *North / South Working Group Meeting January 29-* Members **noted** the update and it was **agreed** that a proposal on the [REDACTED] will be progressed jointly by both Executives and brought to the Joint Plenary for further discussion;
- *Heaney Commemoration- Chair of Poetry renaming and money allocation proposal-* It was **agreed** that the Chair would explore the matter with the Trustees and that it would be considered again at a future Council meeting;
- *Policy & Strategy Committee Meeting 24 February-* Members **agreed** the report and recommendations of the Policy & Strategy Committee;
- *Business & Finance Committee Meeting Monday 24 February-* Members **agreed** the report and recommendations of the Business & Finance Committee;

- *Programme Activity Fund*- Members **noted** the decisions and it was **agreed** that the application deficit matter should be communicated to those organisations affected;
- *Communications Presentation*- it was **agreed** that it should be added to the Reading Room on Board Pad;

