The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon
744th Plenary Meeting
16 September 2020

Kevin Rafter, Chair, Fearghus Ó Conchúir, Deputy Chair, Mark O’Kelly, Loughlin Deegan, Helen Shaw, Martina Moloney, Melatu Uchenna Okorie, Dónall Curtin, Sínead Moriarty, Teresa Buczkowska, Jillian van Turnhout, Pádraig Ó Duinnín.

In attendance:
Maureen Kennelly, Director, Martin O’Sullivan, Deputy Director & Company Secretary, Liz Meaney, Arts Director Stephanie O’Callaghan, Arts Director, Ciara Branagan Finance and Council Executive.

Note: Kevin Rafter, Maureen Kennelly and Martin O’Sullivan were in Merrion Square; other members participants via Zoom video conference.

Documents before the meeting
Agenda
Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 15 July
Director’s Report
Emergency Stabilisation Fund Recommendations
Arts Grant Funding 2021 Recommendations
Survive, Adapt, Renew Update
Conflicts Policy
Communications Working Group Draft TORs
Panel List Renewal
Cnuas Recommendations
Awards and Schemes
Minutes of Policy & Strategy Meeting 18 May 2020

20–09–124 Apologies
Paddy Glackin.

20 – 09–125 Chair’s Introduction
Conflicts of Interest- The Chair noted that members had already declared their conflicts and requested members to declare any further conflicts that they may have with the agenda items and reminded members to advise him of any conflicts that may arise during the course of the meeting.

Chair Activity Report- Members noted the report.
Committee and Working Group Membership- Members **agreed** the following changes:-
- Business and Finance Committee- Pádraig Ó Duinnin appointed;
- Policy and Strategy Committee- Teresa Buczkowska appointed and Pádraig Ó Duinnin retired;
- Abbey Working Group- Melatu Uchenna Okorie appointed and Helen Shaw retired;

Members also discussed the possibility of a female appointment to the Aosdána Working Group.

20 – 09– 126 Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 15 July

The Minutes of the 15 July Plenary meeting were **agreed**.

20 – 09– 127 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

20 – 09– 128 Director’s Report

**Ealáin na Gaeltachta Bursary Scheme**

Members satisfied themselves that the policy basis for this investment was appropriate. Members **agreed** to provide support of €100k to Ealáin na Gaeltachta’s Bursary Scheme. Members also **agreed** that the Arts Council should take an active role in promoting its involvement in this bursary scheme.

**Partnership with Fáilte Ireland on the development of guidelines and initiatives for arts organisations, festival & event organisers to support their survival and recovery due to Covid 19**

Members welcomed and **noted** the partnership agreement. Members also **agreed** to provide €20k towards the procurement of a service provider in relation to advice, analysis and research towards the dissemination of these guidelines and protocols.

**Festival Investment Scheme 2021**

Members **agreed** a forward commitment of €2 million from the 2021 budget for the Festival Investment Scheme 2021.

**Open Call 2021 Phase 2 & 3**

Members **agreed** a forward commitment of €1.05m from the 2021 budget for the Open Call Scheme- of which an amount of up to €50k should be ring-fenced for scheme communications.
Creative Schools Additional budget Support 2020
Members agreed to award additional funding to all participating schools of €1,100.

Remote working - Code of Governance Framework
Members agreed the update to the standing order 2.8.11 for Council, Committee and Working Group Meetings.

Governing Body of Institute of Technology, Sligo
Members agreed to nominate Sarah Searson. Members also agreed that a review of the nominations policy for such appointments should be undertaken.

Committee and Working Group Membership
Members noted current membership across all Committees and Working Groups.

Culture Night and Pay the Artist
Members noted the update.

Arts Council Collection Acquisitions Committee
Members noted the acquisitions made in July 2020.

Update on Spatial policy development work
Members noted the update.

EHRD Policy Update
Members noted the update. Members noted the urgent need to appoint a Head of Diversity and Inclusion. Members also reiterated the need to embed EHRD principles across our media platforms.

Excess hours
Members noted the update.

PR Contract
Members noted the creation of the new Communications Working Group and the plan for this group to inform a new communications strategy and related implementation to include a review of all outsourced costs in communications and PR. In this context, Members agreed that the award of a PR contract at the present time would be premature and agreed to terminate the current tender process. Members also agreed that a statement to this effect should be posted on etenders to notify all tenderers.

Planning for 2021
Member noted the update and that 21 October Meeting is being set aside to discuss
scenarios & approaches for 2021.

20 – 09– 129 Emergency Stabilisation Fund Recommendations
Members were updated on background and approach. Members were informed that the assessment process applied a number of different factors, with aim to ensure both a robust and consistent assessment approach.

1. a review of the actual operational trading result for the 18-month period from January 2020 to June 2021, in order to assess the likely operational surplus or deficit outcome for calendar year 2020.
2. a review of the actual movements in cashflow for the 18-month period from Jan 2020 to June 2021 to ensure that there was a correlation between both.

Members noted that eighteen applications had been received and that recommendations to sixteen had been made.

Members agreed the recommendations. A financial appendix is attached to the Minutes.

20 – 09– 130 Arts Grant Funding Recommendations 2021
Members were provided with a brief overview of each of the artform / practice areas in the context of the AGF programme by the Managers. Members welcomed the individual artform / practice context updates.

Members agreed that future recommendation texts should also address 1) EHRD, 2) Paying the artist and 3) Governance.

Following review of the recommendations decisions on the following were deferred:-
Members reviewed the remainder of the recommendations and agreed the recommended amounts.

Members agreed that grants awarded under delegated authority should be included in future recommendation papers.

20 – 09– 131 Reports
Policy & Strategy Committee 16 September
Loughlin Deegan, Committee Chair, updated members on the meeting and recommendations made:

- Minutes of 18 May 2020- were agreed;
- Equality, Human Rights & Diversity (EHRD) policy implementation- Progress Report given;
- Creative Places Tuam Update Report provided;
- Discussion around new Music Policy & related timeline;
- New Funding programmes update;
- Additional meeting date agreed for October.

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

20 – 09– 132 Cnuas Recommendations
Members agreed the Cnuas recommendations.

20 – 09– 133 Any Other Business
Deferred Remaining Agenda Matters
Members agreed to defer the remaining agenda items to a future meeting.

Summary of decisions

- Committee and Working Group Membership- Members agreed changes to Committee and Working Group membership;
- Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 15 July- The Minutes of the 15 July Plenary meeting were agreed;

- Ealaín na Gaeltachta Bursary Scheme- Members agreed to provide support of €100k to Ealaín na Gaeltachta’s Bursary Scheme. Members also agreed that the Arts Council should take an active role in promoting its involvement in this bursary scheme;
- Partnership with Fáilte Ireland on the development of guidelines and initiatives for arts organisations, festival & event organisers to support their survival and recovery due to Covid 19- agreed to provide €20k towards the procurement of a service
provider in relation to advice, analysis and research towards the dissemination of these guidelines and protocols;

- **Festival Investment Scheme 2021** - Members agreed a forward commitment of €2 million from the 2021 budget for the Festival Investment Scheme 2021.

- **Open Call 2021 Phase 2 & 3** - Members agreed a forward commitment of €1.05m from the 2021 budget for the Open Call Scheme- of which an amount of up to €50k should be ring-fenced for scheme communications;

- **Creative Schools Additional Budget Support 2020** - Members agreed to award additional funding to all participating schools of €1,100;

- **Remote working - Code of Governance Framework** - Members agreed the update to the standing order 2.8.11 for Council, Committee and Working Group Meetings;

- **Governing Body of Institute of Technology, Sligo** - Members agreed to nominate Sarah Searson. Members also agreed that a review of the nominations policy for such appointments should be undertaken;

- **PR Contract** - Members agreed that the award of a PR contract at the present time would be premature and agreed to terminate the current tender process. Members also agreed that a statement to this effect should be posted on etenders to notify all tenderers;

- **Emergency Stabilisation Fund Recommendations** - Members agreed the recommendations;

- **Arts Grant Funding Recommendations 2021** - Members agreed the recommendations; also agreed that grants awarded under delegated authority should be included in future recommendation papers;

- **Policy & Strategy Committee 16 September** - agreed the report and recommendations of the Policy & Strategy Committee;

- **Cnuas Recommendations** - Members agreed the Cnuas recommendations;

- **Deferred Remaining Agenda Matters** - Members agreed to defer the remaining agenda items to a future meeting