

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

721st Plenary Meeting

70 Merrion Square, Dublin
23 January 2019

Present:

Sheila Pratschke, *Chair*, Loughlin Deegan, Sinead Moriarty, Martina Moloney, Miriam Dunne, Mark O’Kelly, Fearghus Ó Conchúir, Donall Curtin, Paddy Glackin (from 2.45pm).

In attendance:

Orlaith McBride, *Director*, Martin O’Sullivan *Deputy Director & Company Secretary*, Liz Meaney, *Arts Director*.

Documents before the meeting

Agenda
Minutes of the Plenary meeting held on 5 December 2018
Director’s Report
Abbey Theatre Update
Wexford Festival Opera
Druid Theatre Update
Appeals Panel Recommendation
Travel and Training Awards (Jul-Dec 2018)
Cnuas Recommendation

19 – 01– 001 Apologies

Monica Spencer, Joan Sheehy, Helen Shaw, Pádraig Ó Duinnín.

19 – 01– 002 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 her of any conflicts that may arise during the course of the meeting.

Department Governance Workshop- Members **noted** 4 March 2019 as the date for the workshop.

Investment 2019 Launch Event 13 February- Members **noted** that the Minister for Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht has agreed to do the launch.



Media Report- Members **noted** that the report was available for Members to review and would be available at each Plenary meeting going forward.

5 Nations Meeting- Members **noted** that the CEOs of the five Art Council's from Ireland and the UK meet on an annual basis and that the next meeting is to take place on 28 March in Dublin.

IFACCA- Members **noted** the importance of this international arts federation, particularly noting the role of the Director in its development. Members suggested that it would be good if key learnings could be shared with Members going forward.

Ireland Chair of Poetry- Members **noted** that nominations are now being requested for the next Ireland Chair of Poetry and that the decision will be made in March.

The Gate Theatre- Members **noted** recent correspondence received from The Gate Theatre. Following consideration Members **agreed** that the Chair should write reaffirming the Arts Council's 2019 funding decision and confirming that if further communication on the matter is required it should be with the Executive.

19 – 01 – 003 Minutes of Plenary Meeting 5 December 2018

Members **agreed** the Minutes for the 5 December 2018 Meeting.

19 – 01– 004 Matters Arising

Board renewal – Members stressed the need for board renewal to be a key focus for funded organisations and that the Executive should re-emphasise this in discussion with strategically funded organisations as a feature of best practice governance.

Literature Ireland- Members confirmed that the Arts Council's key objective is support for translations and that managing 'book fairs' may need to be looked at if this objective is being impacted.

There were no other matters arising.

19 – 01 – 005 Director's Report

Creative Schools 2019

Members **noted** the increased funding of €2.36m which has been made available to the initiative for 2019, the recommendations to 1) expand the scheme further and 2) the request to delegate authority for selection of new participating schools to the Executive. Members **agreed** to:-

- Extend programme for a further year to existing 150 schools;
- Expand pilot initiative to a further 150 schools;
- Delegate authority for selection of the next 150 schools to the Executive.

Collection Acquisitions Committee

Members **noted** the update from the Collection Acquisitions Committee confirming their decision to proceed with the acquisition of eleven works totalling €59,340.

Director's Diary Report

Members **noted** the Director's Diary Report.

19 – 01– 006 The Abbey Theatre Update

Donáll Curtin declared a conflict and left the meeting. David Parnell, Head of Theatre joined the meeting.

Members considered and discussed the public challenge to the Abbey around issues regarding engagement with Irish artists.

Members **noted** that the Arts Council together with representatives of the signatories and the Abbey Theatre were to appear before the Culture Oireachtas Committee on 30 January.

Following detailed discussion Members agreed that the issues in dispute are broader than just an Abbey matter suggesting the Arts Council needs to meet the actors and producers in a sector wide way. Indeed the Arts Council might use the opportunity to confirm its intention to undertake 'an impact analysis' of the Abbey's current operating model. Members noted that the planned engagement represented an opportunity to work with the sector in relation to examining theatre in Ireland as well as an advocacy opportunity for additional public investment in the arts.

Members **agreed** that a draft theme for the sector meeting should be prepared and brought to the February Plenary meeting for agreement. Members also **agreed** that the meeting should be scheduled to take place in March outside of Dublin.

Members **agreed** that the next meeting of the Abbey Working Group should be scheduled at the earliest possible opportunity. Members also **agreed** that Council's concerns should be conveyed to the Abbey in relation to the outstanding information requests and that these matters need to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

19 – 01– 007

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Section 29, Deliberations of FOI Bodies

19 – 01– 008

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