

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

677th Plenary Meeting

70 Merrion Square

Tuesday, 18 November 2014 at 14:00

Present: Sheila Pratschke, *Chair*, Aibhlín McCrann, *Deputy Chair*, John Fanning, Monica Spencer, Mark O'Regan, John McAuliffe, Eimear O'Connor, Miriam Dunne, Judy Woodworth.

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

Documents before the meeting

Agenda

Minutes of meeting held on 21 October

Directors Report

Revised Model of Ministerial Appointments to State Boards

Visual Arts Project awards (Round 1) 2015

Visual Arts Curator Residency Scheme (2014)

Title by Title: Irish Language

Title by Title: English Language

Visual Arts Workspace Grant Awards 2015

Aosdana Cnuas

Approach to Additional Resources

14 – 11 – 101 Apologies

Joan Sheehy, Brian Maguire, John O'Donnell, Ciaran Walsh.

14 – 11 – 102 Chairman's Introduction

Conflicts of Interest

The Chair requested Members to declare any 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. It was **noted** that members had already declared conflicts in respect of decisions before this meeting.

Committee Membership

The Chair confirmed that Monica Spencer, Council member, is to be appointed to the Business & Finance Committee. Members **noted** the appointment.

Away day for the Council

The Chair informed that, as per section 2.7.13 of the Code of Governance Framework, a meeting of Members, without the presence of the Executive, is to be scheduled for January 2015. It was **agreed** that the Chair will contact Members directly to finalise arrangements.

14 – 11 – 103 Minutes of the Plenary meetings: 21 October 2014

Appeals Panel

Members were informed that due to the cessation of the Grants Committee members will no longer be able to sit on the Appeals Panel to adjudicate over Plenary Grant decisions and that in future former Arts Council members will be asked to sit on the Appeals Panel as required. Members were informed that they can still sit on the Appeals Panel for any appealed decisions taken by a peer panel. Members **noted** the update.

Director's Diary Report

A meeting of the Directors of the UK/Ireland Arts Councils: Arts Council England, Creative Scotland, Arts Council Wales, Arts Council Northern Ireland and An Chomhairle Ealaíon – held in Dublin - was highlighted as being very useful and informative with the intention being to hold such meetings on a regular basis. It was also confirmed that the five Councils would look to work together on a number of initiatives.

Members referenced ongoing discussion between the Director and Roisin McDonough, ACNI, in relation to the [REDACTED]. The Director confirmed that a meeting will now take place in January to agree approach. Separately the Director confirmed that the [REDACTED] is to be progressed.

Members separately raised with concern the ongoing viability issues associated with the Ulster Orchestra.

The Director's Diary Report was **noted**.

14 – 11 – 106 Reports

Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting 17 November

Eimear O'Connor, Committee Chairman briefed Members on the meeting, confirming:-

- *Minutes 21 October*- the Minutes of the meeting of 21 October 2014 were agreed, with one minor amendment;
- *Peer Panels Composition*- it was agreed that on the basis of the general welcome for the recommendations in the paper and the specific points agreed in the course of the discussion, the Director would bring back to Council a proposed work plan to give effect to the process of altering and improving the creation of a long list or general pool of appropriate people from which panels could be composed for particular awards and schemes;
- *Economic Conditions of Artists*- the five suggestions made in the paper were considered and the first three agreed. The second (referencing international experience) might usefully take account of the knowledge of Irish resource organisations. In respect of the other suggested actions, the fourth (a letter from the Chair to funded organisations) and fifth (a condition of funding that funded organisations develop and publish a policy on their payment of artists) would have to wait until the outcomes of the first three suggestions were known;
- *Digital Media*- the proposal to establish a working group was agreed and Members were encouraged to propose names of possible members of such a group. Such people should not necessarily 'belong to' the world of the arts and the composition of the working group should be attentive to its age profile as knowledge and experience of digital developments and possibilities were more likely to be associated with a younger

age cohort. The Executive would present the composition of the working group to the February meeting of the committee;

- *Review of Year's Work by Policy and Strategy Committee* – the Review was noted.

The report and recommendations of the Policy and Strategy Committee were **agreed**.

Business & Finance Meeting 29 October

Martin O'Sullivan, Finance Director & Company Secretary, briefed Members on the meeting confirming

- The minutes of the meeting held on the 16 October 2014 were approved;
- *Proposed 'opinion editorial'* -it was agreed that the Director would progress;
- *Investment Overview*- it was agreed that the proposed interactive map and a further demonstration of the data visualisation tool will be brought to 17 November Policy & Strategy Meeting. It was also agreed that the presentation (albeit in non-interactive PDF mode) should be made available to Members via Board Pad;
- *Salaries paid by some funded organisations*- Members noted existing actions taken and agreed that the executive should develop and revert to members with a standard mechanism and that this mechanism should apply to the 2015/16 funding offer;
- *Indicative Budget Strategy across Teams*- Members noted the update and agreed the budgetary approach (subject to budget rechecks in Opera and Traditional Arts);
- *Artists in Prison and Writers in Prison Schemes*- Members sought clarity on when the two Schemes had last been reviewed. Members agreed that this matter might go to Policy & Strategy for review and discussion in 2015;
- *Possible Additional Funding*- it was agreed that the Executive would bring back a proposal to the November Plenary meeting on an indicative approach/process for how additional funding might be allocated;
- *December Plenary Meeting Papers*- it was also agreed, on an exceptional basis, that a printed copy of the papers will be made available to Members on request;
- *Board Pad* - it was agreed that 'review of Board Pad' should be added as an agenda item for the December Business & Finance Committee meeting.

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

14 – 11 – 107 Revised Model of Ministerial Appointments to State Boards

Members were briefed on a recent letter from Heather Humphreys, Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to the Chair requesting formal consultation on the proposed revised model for Ministerial appointments to State Boards. The Director updated Members on the detailed work done by Association of Chief Executives of State Agencies (ACESA) on the matter suggesting that the Arts Council might use ACESA's framework when writing to the Minister. Members noted that particular skills and expertise will be required to support the new strategic plan. The Chair noted the opportunity to highlight the onerous requirements of being a Council Member (including why members should be reimbursed) and the autonomous nature of the Arts Council.

It was **agreed** to write to the Minister and that a copy of the letter should be circulated to Members.

14 – 11 – 108 Awards

Visual Arts Project awards (Round 1) 2015

The Visual Arts Project Awards (Round 1) 2015 were **noted**. A Financial Appendix is attached to the minutes.

Members were informed of panellists concern regarding the level that applicants were being supported by subsidised galleries. Members **noted** the concern.

[REDACTED]

Visual Arts Curator Residency Scheme (2014)

The Visual Arts Curator Residency Awards (2014) were **noted**. A Financial Appendix is attached to the minutes.

Title by Title: Irish Language

The Title by Title Irish Language Awards were **noted**. A Financial Appendix is attached to the minutes.

Members expressed concern about the low level of interest in the award.

Title by Title: English Language

The Title by Title English Language Awards were **noted**. A Financial Appendix is attached to the minutes.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Visual Arts Workspace Grant Awards 2015

The Visual Arts Workspace Grant Awards were **noted**. A Financial Appendix is attached to the minutes.

14 – 11 – 109 Strategic Review

Pathfinder Research

Pearl O'Rourke joined the meeting and made a presentation on the Pathfinder Research to Members.

Members welcomed and **noted** the presentation.

Separately Sean MacCárthaigh, Director of Communications, who was also present for the discussion, took the opportunity to update Members on Culture Fox Phase II. Members **noted** the update. Members also sought clarity on whether Culture Fox could be downloaded as an 'app', it was **agreed** that the matter would be further researched.

Pestle Meeting Feedback

Martin Drury, Strategic Development Director, joined the meeting and made a presentation on key issues identified in the PESTLE meeting which formed part of the research informing the 2014 Strategic Review.

Members welcomed and **noted** the presentation.

Discussion on understanding the role of a 'Development Agency'

Martin Drury, Strategic Development Director, made a presentation on what being a 'Development Agency' might mean for the Arts Council. This included highlighting previous actions of the Arts Council over many years which could be legitimately characterised as those of a development agency. Using a report by the OECD, members were invited to consider four features or key concerns of a development agency: (i) Leadership; (ii) Governance and Co-ordination; (iii) Implementation; and (iv) Economic. The presentation then focused on the observations of the SR14 Steering Group on how the Arts Council might be a development agency for the arts and it concluded with some prompts on the distinction between a funding agency and a development agency. Members welcomed the presentation and it was **agreed** that the presentation would be put up on Board Pad.

Implementation Plan and next steps

The Director made a presentation to Members setting out a proposed approach for the Arts Council's new strategy. The Director highlighted that the strategy agreed will need to be both strategic and responsive. The Director suggested a 10year framework supported by 3yr objectives and annual implementation plans. The Director particularly referenced the Creative Scotland 10 year Plan as an exemplar of what the Arts Council's strategy might aspire towards. The Director then briefed members on the proposed project plan to deliver the Arts Council's strategy by June 2015.

Members welcomed the presentation and sought clarity on a number of the proposed actions and processes contained in the project plan. Members also sought clarity on how the proposed project would be resourced and a discussion also followed on whether a strategy facilitator would be required.

Following a detailed discussion, Members **agreed** to delay moving forward with the project plan pending final discussion on the matter at the Council's away day meeting in January 2015. It was also **agreed** that all presentations and papers would be uploaded to Board Pad. Members did **agree** to feedback in the interim with the names of possible facilitators.

The Director confirmed that a post plenary communication would be released detailing the broad outcomes from today's meeting.

14 – 11 – 110 Aosdána Cnuas

Liz Powell, Registrar, joined the meeting and briefed Members on the recommendation. Members **agreed** to award the cnuas to Anita Groener from January 2015.

14 – 11 – 111 Approach to Additional Resources

The Chair deferred discussion on the paper as it is now likely to be January before any additional allocation, if any, is made. It was **agreed** that a strategic approach should be adopted that might support progressing aspects of the Strategic Review.

14 – 11 – 112 Any Other Business

Letter on Artists' Remuneration

 It was **agreed** that the letter would be put up on Board Pad for Members to review.

Plenary Minutes for Grants

Members enquired as to whether a number of standard minute texts (similar to that currently used by Panels) might be available and used as appropriate for grant decisions made at the

December Plenary meeting. Members **agreed** this approach suggesting, if possible, that it might be useful to have these texts in advance of the meeting.

Summary of decisions/actions

1. *Away day for the Council*- it was **agreed** that the Chair will contact Members directly to finalise arrangements;
2. *Theatre Project Awards* – Members **agreed** that the Minute should be updated;
3. *Minutes of the Plenary meetings: 21 October 2014*- the minutes of the 21 October 2014 Plenary meeting were **approved**;
4. *Arts Audiences Conference –December 9, Dublin Castle*- it was **agreed** that Members would be circulated with the programme when finalised
5. *Council Diary 2015*- it was **agreed** that the Council Diary will be circulated to Members when the Panel dates are included;
6. *Arts and Disability Networking Partnership (ADNP)*- Members **agreed** to commit €15k to the project;
7. *Policy and Strategy Committee Meeting 17 November*- the report and recommendations of the Policy and Strategy Committee were **agreed**;
8. *Business & Finance Meeting 29 October*- the report and recommendations of the Business & Finance Committee were **agreed**;
9. *Revised Model of Ministerial Appointments to State Boards*- it was **agreed** to write to the Minister and that a copy of the letter should be circulated to Members;
10. *Culture Fox 'app'*- it was **agreed** that the matter would be further researched;
11. *Discussion on understanding the role of a 'Development Agency'*- it was **agreed** that the presentation would be put up on Board Pad;
12. *Implementation Plan and next steps*- Members **agreed** to delay moving forward with the project plan pending final discussion on the matter at the Council's away day meeting in January 2015. It was also **agreed** that all presentations and papers would be uploaded to Board Pad. Members did **agree** to feedback in the interim with the names of possible facilitators;
13. *Aosdána Cnuas*- Members **agreed** to award the cnuas to Anita Groener from January 2015;
14. *Approach to Additional Resources*- it was **agreed** that a strategic approach should be adopted that might support progressing aspects of the Strategic Review;
15. *Letter on Artists' Remuneration*- it was **agreed** that the letter would be put up on Board Pad for Members to review;
16. *Plenary Minutes for Grants*- Members **agreed** this approach suggesting, if possible, that it might be useful to have these texts in advance of the meeting.

