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The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

713th Plenary Meeting

70 Merrion Square, Dublin
25 April 2018

Present:

Sheila Pratschke, *Chair*, John McAuliffe, *Deputy Chair*, Loughlin Deegan, Helen Shaw, Pádraig Ó Duinnín, Joan Sheehy, Miriam Dunne, Paddy Glackin.

In attendance:

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

Documents before the meeting

Agenda

Minutes of Meeting held on 14 March 2018

Director's Report

Arts Grant Funding Budget Approach 2019

Strategic Funding Update

Peer Panel List

Abbey Theatre Funding

Code of Governance Framework 2018

Culturefox – options for the future

Bursaries (Round 1) 2018

Young Ensemble Scheme 2018

Projects (Round 1) 2018

Artists' Exemption

Appeals Panel Recommendations

18 – 04– 025 Apologies

Martina Moloney, Monica Spencer.

18 – 04– 026 Chair's Introduction

Conflicts of Interest- The Chair **noted** that members had already declared their conflicts and requested members to declare any other 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.

Culture Ireland Programme

Members **noted** with concern the lack of Arts Council acknowledgement in the Culture Ireland GB18 programme. Members **agreed** that at the next Expert Advisory Committee meeting the Director should express Council's disappointment and request the need for the Arts Council to be properly acknowledged when an Arts Council funded artist or organisation is being referenced. Members also **agreed** that the Chairs and Directors of both Culture Ireland and the Arts Council should meet.

Irish Film Board Meeting 24 April Meeting

Members **noted** that the liquidation of Filmbase was discussed and on a positive note also **noted** that both the Arts Council and Irish Film Board intend to now move ahead with putting a Memorandum of Understanding in place between both bodies.



Section 37, Personal Data

Review of the RTÉ Orchestra's

Members **noted** the recent Boaden Report and the fact that the Department Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht had now asserted its policy position. Members **agreed** that the Arts Council should provide advice to the Department on possible future scenarios and in this regard an initial draft paper should be brought to the May Plenary. It was also **agreed** that a copy of the Boaden Report should be uploaded to Board Pad.

Plenary Meetings in June

Members **agreed** to add a third day to the June 2018 meeting schedule.

Deputy Director

Members **noted** and welcomed the appointment of Martin O'Sullivan as Deputy Director.

18 – 04 – 027 Minutes of Plenary Meeting 14 March 2018

The Minutes of the 14 March Meeting were **agreed**.

18 – 04– 028 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

18 – 04– 029 Director's Report

Venice: Irish Tour 2018

Loughlin Deegan, Council Member, declared a conflict and left the meeting. Following a detailed discussion Members **agreed** to offer €64,000 towards the presentation of the Venice Biennale national pavilion to Irish audiences. Members **noted** that the full approved amount is not contained within the touring budget for 2018 and the additional resources will have to be found from other budget savings.

Filmbase- Reel Art Grantees

Members were briefed on the outstanding obligations due to Reel Art grantees as a result of Filmbase's liquidation. Members expressed some concern at the effect that honouring these commitments would have on other potential 2018 activity. However, having considered the recommendation in considerable detail members **agreed** to honour the obligations to the artists and to set aside a provision of €196,000 from within the film budget.

Members **agreed** that an update on the status of all Third Party Schemes should be brought to the May Plenary.

Commissioner for Seamus Heaney Project

Members **noted** the award of the contract of commissioner to Claire Power.

Open Call Award to Pat Collins

Members **noted** the grant reassignment.

Multi-Annual Funded Grantees

Members **noted** that we are proceeding with establishing Funding Agreements for multi-annual funded grantees and for these to follow the template already in place for the Irish National Opera.

Director's Diary Report

Member **noted** the report.

18 – 04– 030 Reports

Business and Finance Meeting 24 April 2018

Miriam Dunne, Committee Chairman, briefed Members highlighting the following matters:-

- Minutes of 13 February 2018- were agreed;
- Quarter 1 2018 Management Accounts – were agreed;
- MGAW Programme Status update - was noted;
- ICT report & ICT risk register – was noted;
- People and Skills update – was noted;
- FOI report – was noted;
- Procurement of Contracts over €50k - was approved;
- Key Code for bank payments - was agreed.

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

ARC Meeting 24 April 2018

Joan Sheehy, Committee Member, briefed Members highlighting the following matters:-

- Minutes of Meeting held on 13 February 2018 were approved;
- Mazars presented the following reports:
 - Revised Internal Audit Plan (incl audit universe)- Members asked for a Communications Review to be added to 3yr plan and to be prioritised in 2018. Members agreed the plan;
 - Review of Risk Management (without management comments)-Members noted that the Arts Council has good risk management systems in place. Members agreed the report subject to management comments being added;
 - Review of Governance Arrangements- Members noted that the new Code of Governance Framework is shortly to be agreed by Council. Members were informed that good governance arrangements are in place. Members agreed the report;
 - Review of System of Internal Control - Members noted that there were no high level priority some low level control areas were identified for improvement. Members agreed the report;
- The Update on Outstanding Internal Control Recommendations was noted;
- The proposed additional wording in the Statement of Internal Control is to be changed from “Weakness in system” to “Matter to be reported on”. While agreeing the wording in principle Members suggested that its tone should better emphasise the Arts Council’s role and asked for this to be reflected;
- Governance Statement- agreed subject to reference to ‘True and Fair view’ being removed and some small administrative changes;

- Risk register was agreed - The Risk Register was assessed; ICT security was highlighted as a new high risk. In addition members identified a new reputational risk relating to corporate loyalty and the potential damage to the Arts Council if it were misrepresented to a third party or to the public;
- Members noted that the next meeting will be held on 15 May 2018.

The report and recommendations of the ARC Committee were **agreed**.

Policy and Strategy Meeting 25 April 2018

John McAuliffe, Committee Chairman, briefed Members highlighting the following matters:-

- The Artform Policy Papers were signed off by Council. Final copy editing will take place over the coming weeks after which they will be published on the Arts Council website;
- A paper on Arts Grants Funding was presented outlining the assessment, moderation and decision making process;
- A presentation on the lessons learned from the first iteration of Strategic Funding was presented to members;
- Members agreed to a revised definition of Strategic Funding in advance of the next round of applications;
- An update was presented on the Equality and Diversity Policy process;
- Coyne Research presented on a recent Stakeholder Survey. There was much discussion in relation to the definition of a stakeholder as well as the sample grouping and the process of using the newsletter to identify respondents to the survey. Members asked that the Pathfinder research conducted in 2014 be uploaded to the Reading Room for comparative purposes given the in depth nature of that research.

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

18 – 04– 031 Draft Code of Governance Framework 2018

Mark Pery-Knox-Gore, Beauchamps Solicitors, joined the meeting. Members were updated on some changes to the Council's Governance Framework. Members **agreed** to feedback final comments and for the final draft to be brought before the ARC Committee and Plenary in May for final approval.

18 – 04– 032 Arts Grant Funding Budget 2019

Members considered the recommendation and **agreed** a budget of €5.3m for 2019.

Members **agreed** that the purpose of the Open Call Award should be revisited following review of 2019 award outcomes.

18 – 04– 033 Peer Panel Listing

Members welcomed the creation and **agreed** the updated Peer Panel Listing. Members suggested that additional names should be capable of being added to the list on an ongoing basis.

18 – 04– 034 Strategic Funding Update

Members **noted** the 1) general updates on the artforms and arts practice areas and 2) specific organisation updates.

Members acknowledged that being funded as a strategic organisation has certain minimum reporting requirements, with which organisations are obliged to comply. However, Members **noted** the onerous reporting requirements for small organisations and the need for scaling

requirements so that all artforms, especially in areas which are dominated by smaller organisations, will identify the opportunities available in Strategic Funding.

In relation to Touring members expressed some concern that it may be diminished as a practice due to its inclusion in strategic funding. While supporting its inclusion members **agreed** that the matter needs to be kept under review.

Section 30, Functions and Negotiations of an FOI body

18 – 04– 036 Culture Fox

Aileen O'Toole, consultant, and Sean MacCarthaigh, Communications Director, joined the meeting. Members received a detailed presentation on Culture Fox, its current performance and options for the future were discussed. Following consideration of all matters, members particularly noted that artists and arts organisations are using social media and more sophisticated digital platforms to reach potential audiences. The priority for the Arts Council, based on its current strategy, is to explore new and more innovative ways of promoting the work of artists and arts organisations. It was **agreed** to phase out Culture fox and a wind down plan should now be put in place.

18 – 04– 037 Awards

Bursaries (Round 1) 2018

Members **noted** the Literature, Theatre, Dance, Circus, Street Arts and Spectacle, Film, Architecture, Music, Opera and Visual Arts awards. A financial appendix is attached to the Minutes.

Members asked for Literature panel member Don Paterson's name to be correctly recorded in the appendix to the minutes. Members expressed some concern around the number of declared conflicts and **agreed** that renewed focus should be placed on the selection of panel members. Members also stressed the importance of panel members preparing properly for a panel meetings **agreeing** that failure to do so should result in the member being removed from the Panel List.

Young Ensembles Scheme 2018

Members **noted** the awards. A financial appendix is attached to the minutes.

Projects (Round 2) 2018

Members **noted** the Dance, Film, Arts Participation, Theatre, Circus, Street Arts and Spectacle and Traditional Arts awards. A financial appendix is attached to the minutes.

18 – 04– 038 Artists' Exemption

Members **noted** the recommendations. An appendix is attached to the Minutes.

18 – 04– 039 Appeals Panel 24 April

William Merriman- Application Number: A279128- Music Bursary Award – Round 1, 2018- No failure in process or unfair treatment was identified- Appeal not upheld.

Members **agreed** the recommendation.

Members asked if the planning of the meeting could be looked at given that only one appeal was before the Panel.

18 – 04– 040 Any Other Business

Thomas Kinsella

Members **noted** Thomas Kinsella's 90th birthday and **agreed** to extend Council's best wishes to him.

Working Group Meeting with Aosdána

Members **noted** that the next working group meeting is scheduled for 2 May. Members **agreed** to consider adding one of the new Council Members to the Working Group.

Ireland 2040 Capital Funding Announcement

Members **noted** the positive references, by An Taoiseach, to the potential of the arts and culture at the recent Ireland 2040 capital launch. Members **agreed** that a meeting with the Taoiseach needs to be sought as part of the Arts Council's 2019 funding advocacy programme.

Charity Regulator

Members expressed some concern in relation to the direct intervention by the Charity Regulator into the affairs of Project Arts Centre pertaining to a matter, perceived to be connected to the Repeal of the 8th Amendment. Members **noted** the precedent this might set and suggested that a meeting with the Charity Regulator might be appropriate. It was **agreed** that Council must have a further discussion on censorship and the arts.

There were no other matters.

Summary of Decisions

Chairman: _____

Date _____