

The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon
712th Plenary Meeting
70 Merrion Square, Dublin
14 March 2018

Present:

Sheila Pratschke, *Chair*, Loughlin Deegan, Helen Shaw, Pádraig Ó Duinnín, Joan Sheehy, Martina Moloney, Monica Spencer, Miriam Dunne.

In attendance:

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

Documents before the meeting

Agenda
Minutes of Meeting held on 14 February 2018
Director's Report
Touring Recommendations
Funding Recommendation- The Garage Theatre
The Gate Theatre- Strategic Funding Update
Curator in Residence Scheme
Travel & Training Awards
Cnuas Recommendations
Appeals Panel Recommendations

18 – 03– 013 Apologies

John McAuliffe, Paddy Glackin.

18 – 03– 014 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.

Members Governance Matters

Members formally **noted** the resignations of Eimear O'Connor and Brian Maguire for personal reasons.

Working Group Membership Updates

Members **noted** that Pádraig Ó Duinnín would now replace Loughlin Deegan as one of the Council representatives on the Private Investment Advisory Group.

Presentation from Galway 2020

Members **noted** that the presentation was now postponed until the May 2018 Plenary.

Seamus Heaney Commemorative Visual Arts Commission

Members **noted** that the appointment of a commissioner was now at final stage.

Members **noted** that the Dublin aspect of the project may need to be advanced separately and in advance of final agreement from ACNI regarding the Belfast element.

Anthony Cronin Commemorative Bursary

Members **agreed** to develop a once-off award in memory of Anthony Cronin and that a proposal should be brought to the May Council meeting. Members suggested that a Travel Bursary might be considered similar to that introduced for the Ireland Chair of Poetry.

Filmbase (in Liquidation)

Members **noted** the update report that had been circulated to members. Members also noted the appointment of Mazars (the Arts Council's internal auditor) to carry out a special investigation into Filmbase following which the related findings and recommendations will be reported to the Audit and Risk Committee.

18 – 03 – 015 Minutes of Plenary Meeting 14 February 2018

18-02-005 Reports- Irish National Opera Working Group- the minute should read 'Loughlin Deegan updated members_____'

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

18 – 03– 016 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

18 – 03– 017 Director's Report

Creative Schools Delegated Authority

Members were informed of the need to establish a panel, with arts and education expertise, to select the schools for the Creative Schools pilot initiative. Members **agreed** to delegate authority to the panel to manage the selection and oversee the roll-out of the agreed programme.

Collection Acquisition Group

Members **noted** the need for two of the six members, comprising the Collection Acquisitions Group, to be Council Members with relevant expertise. Members acknowledged that it is not always possible to achieve this from within the given membership and that for 2018 the recommendation, on an interim basis, is that the Arts Council would draw on the expertise of recently serving members with no conflict of interest and invite them to be a member of the Acquisitions Group. Members **agreed** the recommendation.

Tradition Now - Partnership with the NCH

Members **agreed** the recommendation to invest €40k, provided within the Traditional Arts budget, to the initiative for 2018.

Venice Art Biennale 2019 Selection Process

Following confirmation of the submitted commissioner applications for the 'Venice Art Biennale 2019', Council **agreed** not to take up its position on the Venice 2019 selection

Committee and **agreed** to delegate the Arts Council's role on the selection panel to Culture Ireland and that CI should be notified to that effect.

Dublin Theatre Festival- request for meeting with Council in relation to 2018 strategic funding decision

Members considered the request and **agreed** that it would best for the Executive to meet with the Dublin Theatre Festival representatives. Members also **agreed** that a communication should issue to the organisation confirming why the decision was made.

Panel Update

Members **noted** the update.

New Music Dublin Cancellation of Programme- adverse weather

Members **noted** the update.



Section 30 functions and negotiations of an FOI body

Organisation Restructure and Workforce Planning

Members **noted** the update. Separately members **noted** that Mary FitzGerald, HR Manager, will leave the Arts Council, at the end of April, to take up a three-year secondment with the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform.

18 – 03– 018 Touring (Round 2) 2018 & Advance Planning 2019

Liz Meaney, Arts Director, and Val Ballance, Head of Venues, joined the meeting. Members were given an overview on the applications received and an update on the budgetary approach and available budget. Members were also informed that ACNI has committed £100k toward 2018/19 cross-border touring. Members **noted** and welcomed the briefing.

Touring (Round 2) 2018 Recommendations

- Music- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Theatre- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Visual Arts- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Traditional Arts- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Literature- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Dance- Members **agreed** the recommendations;

A financial appendix of all the decisions is attached to the Minutes.

Advance Planning 2019 Recommendations

- Music- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Theatre- Members **agreed** the recommendations;
- Visual Arts- Members **agreed** the recommendations; It was **noted** that Val Ballance declared a conflict in relation to Limerick City Gallery of Art and left the meeting prior to the decision being made.

A financial appendix of all the decisions is attached to the Minutes.

Members welcomed the recommendations noting that a good spread of tours had been funded. Members also noted the relevance of the scheme across the country. Members acknowledged the challenge of folding touring into strategic funding while recognising that maintaining a separate scheme is important. Members asked for their thanks to be conveyed to all members of the Executive involved in the recommendation process.

18 – 03– 019 The Gate Theatre Strategic Funding Offer 2018

Liz Meaney, Arts Director, joined the meeting. Members were briefed on progress by the Gate Theatre on the conditions attaching to its 2018 funding offer. Members were informed that the Executive were satisfied that the recommendations of the Bonner Keenlyside review had either been successfully completed or were well underway. Following detailed discussion Members **agreed** that the additional €100k provided for in December could now be released to the Gate Theatre in respect of their strategic funding in 2018 bringing the total offer now to €960k.

This being contingent on the following;

- a) Confirmation, in writing, by the Gate that no part of the Arts Council's grant to the Gate Theatre will be utilised for the purposes of discharging any costs arising from the commissioning of the Independent Review or in discharging any liabilities or expenses which may accrue to the Gate Theatre in resolving any complaints made by any parties (employees or otherwise).
- b) A commitment to undertaking a board skills set audit and to publicly recruit any board vacancies.
- c) A commitment to develop a Strategic Plan, which will encompass a business plan, for a 3-5 year period, to be submitted to Arts Council in advance of the next Strategic Funding application made by the theatre.

18 – 03– 020 The Garage Theatre Appeal

Liz Meaney, Arts Director, joined the Meeting. Following detailed consideration of the advice provided members **agreed** that the Garage Theatre's strategic funding for 2018 should be increased to €40k and that draw down should be conditional on the venue providing the following to the Arts Council;

- a) Submission of an up to date Child Safeguarding Statement and Child Protection and Welfare Policy document which is consistent with Children First National Guidance 2017.
- b) A clear overall strategy for the Garage Theatre including a methodology for addressing the involvement of the board in the strategic development of the venue.
- c) A focused public engagement policy which builds upon the theatres track-record of programming touring work and its participative work for young people, focused on high artistic and operational standards of practice.

18 – 03– 021 Awards

Visual Arts Curator Residency Scheme

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

Travel & Training Award

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

18 – 03– 022 Cnuas Recommendations

Members **approved** the recommendation. A financial appendix is attached to the minutes.

18 – 03– 023 Appeals Panel 7 March

Offline Film Festival- Application Number: A278899- Festival Investment Scheme, Band B- No failure in process identified. Appeal not upheld.

Members **agreed** the recommendation.

18 – 03– 024 Any Other Business

Aosdána Working Group update

Members **noted** very slow progress on discussion matters with the next meeting scheduled for April. The matter of a planned handover to new Council Members in terms of succession planning also needs to be considered.

Child Protection Guidelines

Members **noted** the Arts Council's own compliance. In relation to grantee organisations members **noted** the approach being rolled out across the country for all funded organisations (including a requirement for a standardised template to be completed and submitted).

Protocol for dealing with correspondence received by Members

Members were assured and **noted** that all correspondence is dealt with centrally.

Arts Council's own governance- cultural audit consideration

The matter of whether a cultural audit should be undertaken was raised. Members **noted** that the Arts Council's own Code of Governance Framework is to be brought before Council at its April Meeting and recognised that this agenda item might be the introduction to a wider discussion around governance culture and tone within the Council membership.

Referendum on Repeal of the 8th Amendment

Members recognised that the artistic freedom of organisations in terms of programming is the responsibility of the Boards of organisations given the autonomous and independent nature of their individual structures. However, the Boards and Management of these organisations should be made aware where necessary, on a case by case basis, of their responsibility in relation to the use of public funds during a referendum process.

Membership of Council

Members noted that the process for the appointment of new Council members will begin shortly. Members **noted** how important it is that members are able to effectively contribute to all discussions at the Council table using their sectoral expertise while also respecting their obligations under conflict of interest. Members **noted** the need for this to be a consideration in future appointments.

There were no other matters.