



**Creative and Performing Arts Committees
Minute of the meeting held on 15 December 2005
CoSLA Conference Centre, Edinburgh**

1 Apologies for Absence

- 1.1 Apologies for absence from the Creative Arts Committee were received from John Mulgrew, Philip Long and Lynda Graham and from the Performing Arts Committee they were received from Arthur Cormack and John Evans.

2 Declaration of Interest

2.1 Performing Arts Committee

Matthew Lenton	Cumbernauld Theatre, Vanishing Point (not under discussion today)
Grant Williams	MacRobert
David Wilkinson	Scottish Ensemble
Ronnie Gurr	Scottish Music Centre, The Arches, DGAA – Burnsong
Rab Noakes	DGAA
Ben Twist	Prime Productions (not under discussion today), Hebrides Ensemble, Pitlochry Festival Theatre

- 2.1.1 Committee members did not take part in the discussions of CFOs in which they had declared their interest.

2.2 Creative Arts Committee

Jane Jeffrey	An Tuireann
Bob Grieve	Transmission Gallery, CCA
Colin Greenslade	Peacock
Carol Dunbar	Pier Arts Centre
Neil Gillespie	Pier Arts Centre, Peacock, Inverleith House

- 2.2.1 Committee members did not take part in the discussions of CFOs in which they had declared their interest.

3 Joint Committees – Briefing from the Chairman

- 3.1 The morning's meeting was a joint one of the Creative Arts Committee and Performing Arts Committee with representatives of Capital Committee, Ben Twist, Neil Gillespie and Catherine Woodford.

- 3.2 The Chairman welcomed everyone. He commented on the uncertainty for the arts council and the arts whilst awaiting the response to the cultural commission report. The Chairman advised that a briefing meeting with the Minister had been cancelled at very short notice, but it was known that the Scottish Executive (SE) was looking at a radical re-organisation of the infrastructure of the arts in Scotland and that we had not been consulted, despite offering to help. Various signals about proposals had been given including the possibility that the national companies, however defined, would be funded directly by government.
- 3.3 The announcement from the Minister would now be made early in January, but the Chairman said we had to continue with the strategic review process and Committees were being asked today to give advice to Council on how to take forward the difficult decisions which would have to be made, given the likely funding situation for the arts.
- 3.4 Committee noted that the Performing Arts Committee would be looking at large scale performing arts companies.
- 3.5 Committee noted the possibility of the Minister proposing that local authorities took on a larger role and a member raised the point that this could affect the approach to discussions on some of the scenarios. They also noted the possibility that a new organisation would be created, to incorporate the arts council which would have responsibility for the supply side rather than the demand side, with the latter becoming the responsibility of local authorities. There were a number of concerns raised about the proposed role of local authorities, but the arts council had not yet had the opportunity to discuss this possibility with the SE.
- 3.6 A comment was made that the arts council had to be bolder and offer up solutions which would be challenging to the SE. Another member commented on the huge effort the arts council had made to engage with the SE and politicians but had had little response from them.
- 3.7 There was some concern expressed that the government was looking at the “Australian” model as the example for funding the “national” companies but this was new and had not been proven successful.

4 Joint Committees – Corporate and Cross Council Policy Issues

- 4.1 Committees’ attention was drawn to the individual papers included in the briefing pack which had been given as source material. Members were asked to note the cross council policy areas, with a reminder that audience development and education had taken an integral part in the process to date, but the other areas would also have to be taken into account.
- 4.2 Committee was advised that scenarios had been tested both with colleagues and externally.
- 4.3 Committees were reminded of our three aims. The Director of Arts showed some diagrams of two scenarios giving the hierarchy of an artist led one and participation led one, to provoke thinking. Director of Arts explained the different levels in each.

- 4.4 Committees were informed that Council had not wanted a mix and match – they felt there was an engagement between the two but wanted a synthesis rather than a compromise.
- 4.5 A member accepted the doctrine of the two extremes to develop thinking, but queried the addition of the artist and participation scenarios. He asked if some of the activities, eg lifelong learning, had been dropped, and was assured that nothing had been removed but that some of the thinking had been developed for this stage of the process.
- 4.6 Committee noted that historical funding patterns had had to change and in response to a question about some of the terminology being used it was explained that classifications had been changed to reflect the flexibility required.

5 Joint Committees – Briefing on Process for the Day

- 5.1 Director of Planning and Communications reminded members that we had been tied to historical funding patterns. She mentioned the artform strategies which had been produced and the corporate plan which had given our 3 aims. We have now been looking at the ecosystems as they related to the three aims which had allowed some shifting in our thinking.
- 5.2 Officers had prepared three types of scenarios, optimum, standstill and reduced. Committees were being asked today to look at these and give guidance to Council as to how they relate to the three aims and placement of the organisations.
- 5.3 Committees were asked to
- Comment on their coherence – do they make sense – is there something missing – should we be looking at it differently
 - Discuss and confirm the placement of organisations within these scenarios. Heads of department would be available during the afternoon to give explanations.
- 5.4 Committees noted that most of the CFOs were on three year funding and a process of looking at their funding was required even without the strategic review.
- 5.5 A committee member commented that he felt artistic quality had not been given a high enough profile.
- 5.6 In response to a question about the role of Council members present, it was noted that they were asked to take an active role in discussions.

Creative Arts Committee
15 December 2005

Overriding themes and principles

- Need to be bold and strategic in funding decisions (not just cuts across the board) and therefore recognise the possibility of closure of organisations
- Highlight the role of public subsidy – to support artists and work that might not otherwise happen - SAC as last bastion of support for arts as achievement rather than activity.
- Artistic quality must be explicit in all our work as the key driver of the work of the SAC is investment in artists and artistic excellence [we invest in people and ideas]
- Must emphasise that placement (Essential, Important, Partial) of CFOs is not necessarily a comment on the quality of work that the organisations do merely of how well the work fits the relevant scenario.
- Education and lifelong learning should not be dropped entirely from the list of priorities – one committee member suggested it was ranked third over artists and participation
- Need for consideration of pay, pensions and working conditions of staff in the arts sector (including the large number of voluntary workers) to ensure fair and equal treatment across the country
- Need to consider possibility of wider artform scenarios (e.g. How Visual Arts and Crafts sectors might link more closely)

Scenarios

Cross Council (all Scenarios approved with following comments)

- Optimum - Recognise arts centres as places where new work created
- Optimum - Agree greater support for organisations which support the voluntary arts orgs, not a mandate to support voluntary arts orgs directly.
- Standstill and Reduced - Recognise major impact that arts centres (and therefore their removal) have on rural areas and therefore support prioritising of rural over urban areas

Literature (all Scenarios approved with following comments)

- Optimum - Need more work to clarify what new structure in the sector should be
- Optimum - Should try to make use of work of Literature Forum
- Optimum - Consideration should be given to how any relocation of responsibility for languages (Gaelic and Scots) might have on the relevant CFOs
- Reduced - Cannot agree with statement in reduced scenario (“We therefore contend that there is an incontrovertible argument for overall protection on the Literature budget in a Reduced Scenario”) as this is true about for all art forms.

Visual Arts (all Scenarios approved with following comments)

- Optimum - Need for SAC's Visual Arts Department and the relationship it might wish to develop with visual arts venues/ facilities and with SAC's Crafts department
- Optimum - Need for curatorial development/awareness raising about crafts.

- Standstill and Reduced - Recognise considerable impact on artists that cuts in visual arts funding in Edinburgh may have. Need for dialogue with local authority to address this possible effect

Crafts (all Scenarios approved with following comments)

- Optimum - Need for SAC Crafts Department to consider the relationship it might wish to develop with visual arts venues/ facilities and in relation to joint working with SAC's Visual Arts department
- Optimum - Need for crafts sector to be less cautious and show greater ambition

Creative Arts Committee comments on art form scenarios

Cross Council (CA)	Committee's Key Issues recorded
Optimum Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise arts centres as places where new work created • Agree greater support for organisations which support the voluntary arts orgs, not a mandate to support voluntary arts orgs directly • Need to consider how we would manage the lifecycle of a CFO
Standstill Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise major impact that arts centres (and therefore their removal) have on rural areas and therefore support prioritising of rural over urban areas • Consider whether smaller funding would be more appropriate for the SAC or local authorities (or in partnership)
Reduced Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise major impact that arts centres (and therefore their removal) have on rural areas and therefore support prioritising of rural over urban areas

Crafts	Committee's Key Issues recorded
Optimum Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for SAC Crafts Department to consider the relationship it might wish to develop with visual arts venues/ facilities and in relation to joint working with SAC's Visual Arts department • Need for crafts sector to be less cautious and show greater ambition
Standstill Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
Reduced Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil

Literature	Committee's Key Issues recorded
Optimum Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more work to clarify what new structure in the sector should be • Should try to make use of work of Literature Forum • Consideration should be given to how any relocation of responsibility for languages (Gaelic and Scots) might have on the relevant CFOs
Standstill Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nil
Reduced Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot agree with statement in reduced scenario ("We therefore contend that there is an incontrovertible argument for overall protection on the Literature budget in a Reduced Scenario") as this is true about for all art forms.

Creative Arts Committee comments on art form scenarios

Visual Arts	Committee's Key Issues recorded
Optimum Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for SAC's Visual Arts Department and the relationship it might wish to develop with visual arts venues/ facilities and with SAC's Crafts department • Need for curatorial development/awareness raising about crafts.
Standstill Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to make Strategic Decisions and consider the closure of organisations as opposed to cuts across the board • Recognise considerable impact on artists that cuts in visual arts funding in Edinburgh may have. Need for dialogue with local authority to address this possible effect
Reduced Scenario	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise considerable impact on artists that cuts in visual arts funding in Edinburgh may have. Need for dialogue with local authority to address this possible effect

Performing Arts Committee
Summary Feedback for Council

Corporate Themes

1. The corporate scenario should place the artist and artistic quality to the fore, and should strive to be bold. Misery for all has to be avoided as an approach.
2. The relationship between the artistic vision and the audience engagement should be evident in what we support.
3. The artist / participant dynamic does not have to be presented as a choice but should be thought of as a fusion / synthesis whereby good work can help build sophisticated audiences who demand good work and thus create a 'virtuous circle'
4. The Scottish Arts Council must take on, and be allowed to take on, the responsibility for making judgements about artistic quality.
5. If anything this should be an even stronger line in the context of standstill and reduced budgets, where the ability to take artistic risks is essential, allowing our support to reflect a changing cultural environment, addressing new situations through new solutions.
6. CFOs which get a L or M rating should only attract foundation funding with clear conditions attached which address the issues raised in the assessment
7. The funding system must allow a dynamic for renewal; new organisations and new approaches to come through.
8. The relationship between the artist, the artistic production, and its distribution, must be a fundamental aspect of our strategic overview.
9. The learning role of arts organisations should be stepped up a gear in those that we fund to an optimum level; the Cultural Coordinators and Creative Links programmes are not in themselves an answer.
10. We need to invest more in the managerial and entrepreneurial capacities of the sector – in individual artists and in organisations.
11. There is potential in the development of a services model that supports, develops and nurtures the sector, for example in terms of audience development and management capabilities.
12. SAC must continue to simplify its funding structures and processes.
13. We need to continue to refine the approach to artistic assessment within the quality framework.
14. We need to more clearly define the 'project' funding category, to allow it to accommodate multi year commitments where appropriate. The funding options need to be expanded - there was seen to be too big a gap between Foundation funding and project funding (the latter was interpreted as a fairly short term and limited arrangement). Scope for something along the lines of Programme funding (the Committee Chair's suggestion for an alternative terminology) which would like together a number of projects across a longer timescale.

15. For NTS and Scottish Ballet, there was a clear steer that the companies should be managed as part of the overall sector and that in the case of SB this currently works well.
16. There was more ambivalence in relation to the music companies; these certainly need to be managed differently and in a way which does not absorb a disproportionate amount of SAC time

22nd December 2005

Performing Arts Committee comments on art form scenarios

	Committee Scenario Discussion
Cross Council PA	Key Issues
Optimum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acknowledge & credit the critical multi-faceted role of regional arts centres, creating networks & collaborations and pivotal to eg development of children’s theatre. • SAC should engage with and promote best practice hubs/arts centres. • Articulate the relationship of roles/responsibilities between SAC and Local Authorities more clearly especially with reference to funding, historical patterns etc. • Any new SAC/LA relationship requires in-built protection for artistic leadership, perhaps LA funding receiving and provision, SAC funding production • Extra funding to Local Authorities would require internal re-structuring to ensure sufficient artistic expertise available.
Standstill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arts & Community fund sacrificed for infrastructure. • There’s no evidence of any simplification of funding within Standstill/Reduced. SAC should fund fewer projects. • Not all organisations should be expected to undertake education work, rather funding should focus on those where it’s appropriate and successful.
Reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut funding to weak organisations, to enhance the best, encourage excellence and create critical mass.

DANCE	Key Issues
Dance Optimum For Council: Young Artform	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young artform trying to catch up. Sector is balanced across artist/participation/education according to CFO remits. • Shortage of product, environment does not encourage new work. • SAC fills Dance agency gap. • SAC should strengthen relationships with FE • Sector provides good model of connectivity with companies/education/SAC. • Good integration with Scottish Ballet, should be enhanced. Separation of national companies would jeopardise whole sector. • Provision of common services to help sector develop and grow audiences

Performing Arts Committee comments on art form scenarios

Dance Standstill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find new ways to support young choreographers – via FE colleges? • Loss of traditional dance.
Dance Reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project work cut to continue support for CFOs • Loss of traditional dance (because not artist-led)

DRAMA	Key Issues
<p>Drama Optimum</p> <p>For Council: Need confident statement on quality issues and need for increased funding.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTS a major factor absorbs £4m out of £12m funding. Funded separately but key to discussion. • Committee felt scenario conveyed an over optimistic picture • Scottish theatre requires balance of a strong life independent of NTS to counteract absorption of expertise/talent by NTS. • Management, entrepreneurial expertise & resources should be shared amongst companies, for business/admin matters. • Committee felt scenario conveyed optimistic picture of theatre in Scotland. Optimum would produce more mediocrity, standstill/reduced would not provide high quality. • Celebrate & nurture good writing, acknowledging that type of work is changing.
Drama Standstill	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTS takes over Scottish Theatre to saturation point. • Less opportunity for good work. • Encourage risk taking, but manage the risk. • Invest in areas of quality practice. • Fewer touring companies would be supported; localities are sensitive
Drama Reduced	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTS as above. • Organisations at risk because not ticking boxes. • Danger of work reducing to Central Belt.

Performing Arts Committee comments on art form scenarios

MUSIC	Key Issues
<p>Music Optimum</p> <p>For Council: Who is flag bearer for contemporary traditional music?</p> <p>Scottish Opera should be answerable for missed deadlines.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Viability without national companies? • More rigorous financial management of national companies required. • Engagement with contemporary music welcomed, with emphasis on art over commerce. • Should be more focus on creative industries, with SAC taking lead in music, rather than default to film/video. • Possible future management of YMI alongside Cultural Coordinators, with LA. • Where are SAC's corporate aims acknowledged within Music scenario? • Who champions contemporary traditional music? • Engagement with contemporary music VITAL
<p>Large Scale</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for public debate. • Need to accept some artforms are expensive and defend money spent provided finances are well managed? • Where to cut in standstill/reduced? Cut organisations which are inefficient or duplicated within sector? • Fund growth and good artistic quality.
<p>Overarching Themes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be bold • Have the courage to cut, especially in reduced funding. • Simplify funding in a post-cut situation.

Performing Arts Committee comments on art form scenarios

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Take risks, managing risk carefully.• Develop arts leadership/management• Increase rigour/quality of artistic assessment• Investigate service model development. |
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