



Scottish **Arts** Council

Confidential
S/C06m1m1

Council
Minute of the Meeting Held on 24 January 2006
CoSLA Conference Centre,
Haymarket Terrace, Edinburgh

Present:

Richard Holloway	Chairman
Joanna Baker	
Arthur Cormack	
Steven Grimmond	
Jennifer Hawksworth	
Jane Jeffrey	
James McSharry	
Annie Marrs	
Rab Noakes	
Ben Twist	
Jennifer Waterton	

In Attendance:

Graham Berry	Chief Executive
Jim Tough	Depute Chief Executive, Director of Arts
Morag Arnot	Director of Planning and Communications
Helen Bennett	Head of Crafts
Amanda Catto	Head of Visual Arts
Anita Clark	Head of Dance
Norah Campbell	Head of International
Caroline Docherty	Head of Planning and Research
Iain Munro	Head of Lottery
Ian Smith	Head of Music
Fiona Sturgeon	Head of Audience and Organisation Development
David Taylor	Head of Drama
Pat Hymers	Executive Manager
Jenny Attala	Literature Officer
Aly Barr	Literature Officer
Michelle Jordan	Senior Communications Officer
Carol Warner	Arts Development
Irene Watson	PA to Chief Executive (Minutes)

The Chairman advised that Bob Downes had resigned from Council due to a new work commitment. Apologies for absence were received from Roy McEwan and John Mulgrew.

4. Report from Creative and Performing Arts Committees

- 4.1 Joanna Baker, who had chaired the last Creative Arts Committee, paid tribute to the members of that committee for engaging so well with the process. She said that the committee had also praised staff for the significant work undertaken by them. Summary of what happened was clearly laid out in the minutes. There was much discussion on how much responsibility was being placed on staff in terms of individual decisions. There was no fundamental querying of expertise but awareness that staff were being asked to make in depth analysis. We needed to be very, very sure about our decisions, when going through this process, that everything was transparent and able to be stand up to scrutiny.
- 4.2 It was considered important that organisations understood the process and that decisions arising from it did not necessarily mean they were not good enough to be supported, but that they did not fit our current aims.
- 4.3 Jennifer Waterton had chaired the Performing Arts Committee. She explained that there had been 68 organisations to discuss and the majority of the recommendations were agreed. It had been useful to have Heads of departments available for further information on some of the organisations. There had been some concern that the exercise was very much process based and did not look closely enough at artistic performance and they weren't sure they had the right answer for some organisations. She said the process had to be robust and that, in particular there needed to be a stronger and transparent methodological approach to assessing artistic quality. We needed to be bold, however unfavourable that was. Given what had happened post the meeting in December we had to have confidence, make decisions and not fudge them. She wondered if there could be something between foundation funding and project funding. It had, however, been a very good day and a very hard working day.
- 4.4 Ben Twist said he had attended the Performing Arts Committee meeting and agreed with the Chair's comments about the assessment process. This was where our reputation and judgement lay and he was not 100% convinced that we were getting it right. We had to ensure that expert advisers gave reports of the highest quality. He had felt personally quite exposed and was one of the few people with knowledge of drama, the largest sector role. There was not a full complement of the performing arts committee members that day which he felt had been a disadvantage. It had worked better in some areas than others.
- 4.5 In response to a question about the Ian Brown, Review of the Review of Funding, the Chief Executive advised that the final report had been received, but required to be studied in detail by Group Heads.

5. Strategic Review

- 5.1 The Chief Executive expressed his thanks to staff for the significant work they had done. He considered that it had been a worthwhile exercise and in particular mentioned Jim Tough and Morag Arnot for ensuring the process was absolutely clear and defensible.
- 5.2 There was now sufficient information on record for future advocacy with regard to optimum scenarios and financial requirements. The £134m we had identified as necessary for an optimum scenario would not be available so realistic scenarios had to be produced. The Chief Executive explained that priorities had been re-ordered and this had allowed us to identify where resources should be provided. It was necessary to strengthen organisations and make them more sustainable and there would be a different relationship with them. By implication there were organisations which were equally valuable in terms of the arts but who would in future not be funded as currently.
- 5.3 The Director of Arts explained that we were going back to the first principle that the status quo was not an option. We had reinforced this at each stage of the process. It had been done with some trepidation when setting priorities as there had been acknowledgement that this would impact on people and Council had to be confident with the process.
- 5.4 Various scenarios looking at particular aims had been produced and it had become apparent that one with a 'synthesis' of participation and support for artists best suited our aim to become a development organisation.
- 5.5 The Corporate Scenario diagram was explained. This showed support for the artist through foundation support which had resulted from artform scenarios that colleagues felt were fundamental to the health of their artform. The various rings in the diagram were also explained which were an attempt to describe our vision and the "fan" showed the policy areas across Council with each segment addressing a particular policy area.
- 5.6 The second diagram showing support for the artists allowed clarity about our role. The third diagram, support for organisations recognised the need for flexible roles which required to be explored further.
- 5.7 In response to a question about our commitment in terms of our current spending review, the Chief Executive explained that our 2007/08 grant was known. Another member concluded that we were going in the right direction and it would allow a number of artists to make a living and not rely on "handouts".
- 5.8 The Director of Arts said that a final version would be brought to the February Council meeting. It was hoped that by that stage we would know how much of the £20million we would be allocated. There were frequent comments from members stressing the need to be bold.
- 5.9 Questions were asked about the percentage of the extra funding the Minister had announced to be given cultural organisations and the national companies and if the latter would be able to receive project funding or capital funding from the

Scottish Arts Council. It was explained that it was not yet clear how this extra resource would be distributed. Also the national companies would not be eligible for our general funds but, as with other organisations, they would be entitled to apply for lottery funding as these were open applications. The Chief Executive added that until we knew exactly when the national companies would be transferred to the Scottish Executive it was difficult to decide on their funding after 2006/07.

- 5.10 Council commented on the need for the national companies to have a relationship with other parts of the arts. It was also recognised that other organisations may consider themselves to be national and therefore feel they have the potential for being funded by the Scottish Executive.
- 5.11 To allow Council to make decisions at its February meeting members considered that more narrative was required. They asked for the following:
1. a line about each of the foundation organisations and why they were in the foundation group
 2. a line next to the ones not in the group as to why they were not, as we have to justify that.
 3. précis of how decisions were made on individual relationships arising from the work undertaken on the scenarios
 4. information relating to the geographic spread
 5. highlight any special issues, eg historical, exceptional
 6. how would the situation be resolved, and conditions applied, with regard to the fact that some organisations had good leadership and others do not.
- 5.12 The Chief Executive reminded Council that the Quality Framework would come into force which each organisation would be required to meet. There would be a different relationship with them, with monitoring and evaluation of their work being more rigorous than currently.
- 5.13 Council were invited to send comments or contributions for agenda for the February meeting to Group Heads. They were assured that Committee members would be involved in the process.
- 5.14 It was noted that a Communications Strategy would be brought to Council.
- 5.15 A member asked about preparing a “shopping list” should there be any Scottish Executive underspend available and this was acknowledged.
- 5.16 The Chairman invited comments from Department Heads:
- 5.16.1 Head of Drama welcomed the chance for re-iteration of the SR process – it had been complex and would have a huge impact. We really did need to be confident about it. He was not pleading for any change as he agreed that we needed a new relationships with some organisations. Flexibility was required but it should be acknowledged that some organisations required a degree of security. Planning for international work could take from 18 months to even three years. There needed to be informed decisions, not dictate.

- 5.16.2 Head of Music raised concerns about the transfer of staff. His department would be affected more than others, with 80% of his budget being transferred to the Scottish Executive. He was not optimistic about how this would relate to working in Creative Scotland. He would like to see Scottish Screen and the Scottish Arts Council talking together soon. He commented that some of the good things we do would transfer to the new organisation.
- 5.16.3 Head of Visual Arts was concerned that the Scottish Arts Council would be scrutinised. We had to ensure that we knew what the key principals were for the arts in Scotland and that artists were at the heart. Organisational infrastructure was crucial but what artists wanted was how they made their work and who they worked with and we needed a little more time so that these decisions were reflecting the needs of artists across all of the artforms.
- 5.16.4 Head of Dance was not clear about how Minister's statement fitted into the Strategic Review process. She mentioned that other companies would want to get to that stage of applying for national status and information on which of these could have the potential for doing so may be beneficial.
- 5.17 Council stressed the need to keep everyone informed, even those issues which were unfavourable. Internal and external communication should not be underestimated. Jennifer Hawksworth agreed to give a written steer on this issue.
- 5.18 The Director of Planning and Communications advised that CFOs had been promised they would be briefed after this meeting. It would be explained that Council had not made a final decision as we would be bidding for some of the £20m. A Communications strategy for the strategic review was already in draft format and internal arrangements had been discussed.
- 5.19 The Chief Executive advised that he had held two meetings with staff as well as meeting the union representatives. He would continue to meet staff and the union on a regular basis. Discussions with the Scottish Executive would begin the following day.
- 5.20 Council noted that Committees would be given the opportunity to revisit the already substantial work in light of recent events. Care had to be taken not to duplicate work already done. A summary of the current situation together with what is expected of them and what had changed in the interim was considered to be required.
- 5.21 The Executive Manager would contact committee members to ascertain their availability during week beginning 20 February.
Action: Executive Manager

21 February 2006