



Report of Creative and Performing Arts Committees
15 December 2005

1 Introduction

1.1 The Creative and Performing Arts Committees met on 15 December. They were presented with scenarios for each of the art form heads which had been developed by the Department Heads, in consultation with colleagues and advisors and have been submitted and reviewed by the Group Heads. They reflected the art form heads' plans for sector development within three budget scenarios:-

- Optimum
- standstill
- reduced (a 15% cut)

and set against the three corporate scenarios

- one based on the aims of the Council, which are all of equal status
- an artists scenario
- a participant scenario

1.2 In addition, Committees were also presented with a matrix setting out:-

- the officer's assessments (high, medium or low) of the existing core funded organisations (CFOs)
- the placement (essential, important or partial) of the existing CFOs.
- and the proposed funding relationship (foundation, development agencies, projects or individuals) for the existing CFOs.

for each of the budget scenarios (optimum, standstill and reduced) as well as corporate scenarios (existing aims, artist and participant).

1.3 As approved by Council, committees were asked to

- test the coherence of the art form scenarios and their supporting arguments
- to discuss and confirm the placement of individual organisations in relation to the scenarios
- make comment on what they see as key themes and issues across art form and cross council policy areas.

1.4 The comments of the two committees on the corporate themes, artform scenarios and CFO placements are attached. The chairs of the two committees will be available to verbally brief Council on their comments.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Council are asked to note the Committees approval of the art form scenarios and CFO placements together with and their additional comments.

Pat Hymers
Executive Manager
January 2006

Creative Arts Committee
15 December 2005
Feedback and comments for Council

Comments on Corporate Themes

- 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)

Creative Arts Committee
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Feedback and comments for Council

Comments on artform scenarios

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| Cross Council (CA) | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
| 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 |

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| Crafts | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
| 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 |

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| Literature | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
| 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. |

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| Visual Arts | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
| 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 |

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Comments on Corporate Themes

- 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.
- The relationship between the artistic vision and the audience engagement should be evident in what we support.
- 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'
- The Scottish Arts Council must take on, and be allowed to take on, the responsibility for making judgements about artistic quality.
- 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.
- 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
- The funding system must allow a dynamic for renewal; new organisations and new approaches to come through.
- The relationship between the artist, the artistic production, and its distribution, must be a fundamental aspect of our strategic overview.
- 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.
- We need to invest more in the managerial and entrepreneurial capacities of the sector – in individual artists and in organisations.
- 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.
- SAC must continue to simplify its funding structures and processes.
- We need to continue to refine the approach to artistic assessment within the quality framework.
- 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.

- 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.
- 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

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Comments on artform scenarios

| Cross Council PA | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
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| Optimum Scenario | <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 Scenario | <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 Scenario | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut funding to weak organisations, to enhance the best, encourage excellence and create critical mass. |

| DANCE | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
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| Optimum Scenario 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 |
| Standstill Scenario | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find new ways to support young choreographers – via FE colleges? • Loss of traditional dance. |
| Reduced Scenario | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project work cut to continue support for CFOs • Loss of traditional dance (because not artist-led) |

| DRAMA | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
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| <p>Optimum Scenario</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. |
| <p>Standstill Scenario</p> | <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 |
| <p>Reduced Scenario</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NTS as above. • Organisations at risk because not ticking boxes. • Danger of work reducing to Central Belt. |

| MUSIC | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
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| <p>Optimum Scenario</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 |

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| Large Scale companies | All scenarios approved with the following comments |
| | <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. |

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| Overarching Themes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be bold • Have the courage to cut, especially in reduced funding. • Simplify funding in a post-cut situation. • Take risks, managing risk carefully. • Develop arts leadership/management • Increase rigour/quality of artistic assessment • Investigate service model development. |
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