

# The Arts Council/An Chomhairle Ealaíon

## 729<sup>th</sup> Plenary Meeting

70 Merrion Square, Dublin  
23 October 2019

Kevin Rafter, Chair, Loughlin Deegan, Helen Shaw, Sinead Moriarty, Dónall Curtin, Paddy Glackin, Martina Moloney, Melatu Uchenna Okorie (up to 4pm), Jillian Van Turnhout, Fearghus Ó Conchúir, Mark O'Kelly.

### **In attendance:**

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

### **Documents before the meeting**

Agenda  
Chair of Poetry Information Note  
Chair's Activity Update Report  
Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 17 September  
Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 11 October  
Director's Report  
Multi Annual Funding Update 2020  
RAISE Programme Update & Recommendation  
Advocacy Campaign Proposal 2020-21  
Appeals Panel Recommendations  
Awards & Schemes  
Aosdána Cnuas Recommendations  
Minutes ARC Meeting 21 May 2019  
Minutes Business & Finance Meeting 26 June 2019  
Risk Register

### **19 – 10– 097 Apologies**

Pádraig Ó Duinnín.

### **19 – 10– 098 Chair's Introduction**

*Conflicts of Interest*- The Chair **noted** that members had already declared their conflicts and requested members to declare any further conflicts that they may have with the agenda items and reminded members to advise him of any conflicts that may arise during the course of the meeting.

#### *New Member Welcome*

The Chair extended a warm welcome and best wishes to new Council members, Melatu Uchenna Okorie and Jillian Van Turnhout.

*New Members Resignation*- Members **noted** that Claudine McMahon had resigned from the Council prior to her first meeting due to work commitments.

*Chair of Poetry Trust-* Members **noted** the update from the Chair and welcomed confirmation that the transfer of the day to day administration of the Trust to Poetry Ireland has now taken place. Members also **noted** that a body of work on related governance matters is still to be completed.

*Committee/Group Membership*

Members **noted** that the Chair will talk to members individually about participation in Standing Committees and Working Groups

*Chair's Activity Update Report-* Members **noted** the update.

**19 – 10– 099 Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 17 September**

Members **agreed** to the following amendment to minute 19 – 09– 091 Awards-Markievicz Award 2019- '---restrict funding towards an artist working through Irish and from the Gaeltacht----'.

Members **agreed** the Minutes for the 17 September 2019 Meeting.

**19 – 10– 100 Minutes of the Plenary Meeting held on 11 October**

Members **agreed** the Minutes for the 11 October 2019 Meeting.

**19 – 10– 101 Matters Arising**

There were no other matters arising.

**19 – 10– 102 Director's Report**

[REDACTED]

Section 36, Commercially Sensitive Information

*Venice: Irish Tour 2020 – Eva Rothschild - The Shrinking Universe*

Members **agreed** to allocate €70k towards the Venice: Irish Tour 2020 confirming that the additional €20k funding required should come from the 2020 touring budget.

*Visual Artists Workspace Scheme 2020: Delegated Authority*

Members **agreed** to delegate decision making authority for this scheme to the Executive.

Members asked that the delineation between commercial and non-commercial workspace providers needs to be carefully monitored in future iterations of the Scheme.

*Appeals Panel Review Update*

Members **noted** that the review is underway and that the final report will come to the November Plenary Meeting.

*Director's Diary Report*

Members **noted** the report. Members specifically noted the update from the European Chapter meeting of the International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies.

**19 – 10– 103 Reports**

#### *Audit and Risk Committee Meeting 10 October*

Dónall Curtin, Committee Chairman, updated members on the meeting and recommendations made:

- *Minutes of Meeting held on 21 May 2019*- were approved;
- *C&AG Audit Completion Memorandum for the year ended 31 December 2018*- Members met with the C&AG and reviewed its report. Members met in private session with the C&AG. The C&AG confirmed that they had received the full co-operation from the executive during their audit;
- *Draft Internal Audit Assurance Report Q4 2017 – Q3 2019*- Members noted the report;
- *Internal Audit*- Members discussed the proposed Communications Review report with the Internal Auditor. Members noted the update on the proposed Grants Review;
- *Risk Register* – Members reviewed the Risk Register and the SDD Risk Register. Members agreed that the risk register should be ranked by risk level and that the top 10 risks should be presented to each Plenary meeting.

Members noted the report and **agreed** the recommendations from the Audit and Risk Committee.

#### *Business and Finance Committee 11 October*

Martina Moloney, Committee Chairman, updated members on the meeting and recommendations made:

- *Minutes of 26 June 2019* - were agreed;
- *2019 Qtr3 Management Accounts* - were agreed. Members also agreed that €875k of anticipated reserves should be made available for use in the 2020 Budget;
- *Budget 2020*- Members noted the presentation. Members noted that there is still uncertainty over the allowable use of €1.5 million of the grant voted;
- *HR report* – Members noted the report;
- *ICT Transformation Project Update* – Members welcomed progress made and noted the update; Members welcomed the shortlisting of suppliers but highlighted the need for budgetary control;
- *ICT BAU Update* – Members noted the report;
- *FOI report* – was noted;
- *Property Update* - was deferred to be reviewed by the Plenary;

Members noted the report and **agreed** the recommendations from the Business and Finance Committee.

#### **19 – 10– 104 Property Update**



### **19 – 10– 105 Budget 2020**

A presentation was made to Members. Following detailed discussion Members **agreed** the overall budget approach and specifically **agreed** to:-

- Open Call commitments until 2021. It was agreed that this requires careful managing in terms of messaging;
- allocate an additional €2m of funding towards the 2020 budget;
- It was agreed that Arts Managers could move 1-1.5% funding 'above' and 'below' the line depending on the strategic requirements of the artform;
- high-level proposals for allocation of the €2m. Members specifically asked for further breakdown in relation to the €250k allocated to the 3yr plan referencing a need to allocate a portion towards the Arts Council's Equality, Human Rights and Diversity Policy.

Members also **agreed** that a discussion on Galway 2020 should be put on the agenda for the November Plenary.

### **19 – 10– 106 Multi Annual Funding 2020**

#### *Strategic Funded Organisations 2018 MAF*

Members **noted** that eight organisations had been approved for strategic funding MAF for the period 2018-2020. Members noted that since approval in 2017 there had been no significant deviations or changes to either these organisations, the proposed programmes or governance matters. Members **noted** that they are set to maintain their MAF status in 2020 and **agreed** the amounts committed to these organisations for 2020.

#### *Strategic Funded Organisations 2019 MAF*

Members **noted** that six organisations had been approved for strategic funding MAF for the period 2019-2021. Members noted that since approval in 2018 there had been no significant deviations or changes to either these organisations, the proposed programmes or governance matters. Members **noted** that they are set to maintain their MAF status in 2020 and **agreed** the amounts committed to these organisations for 2020.

Members **agreed** that more narrative on progress of how MAF is working across the fourteen organisations should be brought back to Plenary in the New Year.

#### *The Abbey MAF- 2020*

Dónall Curtin, Council member, left the meeting for this agenda item while Liz Meaney, Arts Director and Rachel West, Head of Theatre joined the meeting.

Members considered the recommendation. Following careful consideration, members **agreed** the 2020 funding offer of €6.8m, with an additional €200,000 restricted for touring and with both offers subject to the conditions listed in the paper.

In relation to the Abbey Working Group, - which was meeting on November 1, 2019 - members **agreed** that it should continue in 2020 and that dates should be agreed for 2020 as soon as possible.

The Chair noted that a meeting of Abbey Selection Committee (for Abbey board members) had still not been convened and that this issue would be raised at the Working Group meeting.

*Irish National Opera MAF- 2020*

Melatu Uchenna Okorie, Council Member, declared a conflict and left the meeting. Liz Meaney, Arts Director and Niall Doyle, Head of Music joined the meeting.

Members considered the recommendation. Members welcomed the positive report and **agreed** the €3.076m recommendation for 2020. It was agreed that clarification would be sought in relation to board rotation.

**19 – 10– 107 RAISE Review and Phase 2 Proposal**

Kieran MacSweeney, Private Investment Adviser, joined the meeting.

Members considered the report and recommendation. Members **agreed** to:-

- commit to RAISE Phase 2 for the period 202-21 and for the related selection process to commence during q4 2019;
- introduce a new matched funding mentoring initiative as part of RAISE phase 2;
- allocate €500k budgetary provision to RAISE phase 2 for the period 2020-2021.

**19 – 10– 108**

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Section 30 Functions and Negotiations of FOI bodies

**19 – 10– 109 Risk Management**

Aidan Burke, Operations Director, joined the meeting.

A presentation was made to members. Members welcomed and **noted** the presentation. Members specifically highlighted matters such as recruiting and retaining talent- specifically in relation to ICT. In relation to the Risk Register, members **agreed** that a risk appetite tolerance should be added to each of the risks.

**19 – 10– 110 Awards**

*Engaging with Architecture, 2019 – Strand 1 and Strand 2*

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

Members **noted** in feedback from the panel that the level of ambition and number of applicants received were at a very low level.

Separately in relation to the Visual Arts Projects Panel, members suggested that there should be more collaboration between the Visual Arts & Film team given the number of applications from film based artists making applications under the visual arts. Members agreed that both Managers should discuss and agree an approach.

**19 – 10– 111 Aosdána Cnuas**

Members **agreed** the recommendations. A financial appendix is attached to the Minutes.

## 19 – 10– 112 Matters for Information

Members **noted** the following:-

- Business and Finance Minutes 26 June 2019;
- Audit and Risk Committee Minutes 21 May 2019;
- Current Risk Register.

## 19 – 10– 113 Any Other Business

### *Culture Night*

Members **noted** that Culture Night will now move across to the Arts Council and that a meeting had taken place with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht as an initial briefing. Discussions were also had with the Local Authority Arts Officers. Council was also informed that discussions took place at these meetings in relation to artists' fees with re-assurance provided that both the Department and Local Authorities all ensure that artists receive a fee for their involvement.

It was agreed to return to this as an item for discussion as further meetings take place. The Director informed members that meetings with RTÉ and Dublin City Council are scheduled over the coming weeks.



Section 36, Commercially Sensitive Information

### *Update on Arts Council's submission to DCHG re Symphony Orchestra & NCH*

Members **agreed** that an update should be sought.

### *Visual Arts Organisations Letter to Arts Council Members and Executive*

Members noted that Arts Council is critically conscious of producing challenges in visual arts however, Council recognised that the matter cannot be engaged with until after December funding decisions have been made.

### *Members Private Session*

The Executive left the meeting and members met in private session.



Section 30 Functions and Negotiations of FOI Body

There were no other matters