



**Minutes of the Council meeting held at the Beech Hill Country House Hotel, Derry
Thursday 15 May 2008 at 2.00pm**

PRESENT

Rosemary Kelly (Chairman), Kate Bond, Damien Coyle (Vice Chairman),
Raymond Fullerton, David Irvine, Tony Kennedy, Ian Montgomery, Joe Rice,
Paul Seawright, Brian Sore, Peter Spratt.

IN ATTENDANCE

Roisin McDonough (Chief Executive)
Paul Burns (Director of Corporate Services)
Philip Hammond (Director of Arts Support)
Nick Livingston (Director of Strategic Development)
Lorraine McDowell (Director of Operations)
Noirin McKinney (Director of Arts Development)
Claire Robinson (Executive Assistant to the Council)

APOLOGIES

Eithne Benson, Bill Montgomery, Sharon O'Connor, Janine Walker

5 PRESENTATION – ILEX

The Chairman welcomed Ilex Chairman, Sir Roy McNulty and Chief Executive, Bill Kirk to the meeting.

Sir Roy McNulty, Chairman welcomed Council members to Derry and thanked them for the opportunity to provide an update on the progress of the city regeneration project. Bill Kirk, Chief Executive outlined the strategic interventions with specific reference to the Integrated Transport Strategy and the Arts & Culture Strategy. He provided breakdowns for the Integrated Development Fund and North West Challenge Fund focusing on the work around the Built Heritage Programme and the Walled City Lighting. He indicated that programmes for all projects listed were in place and had been approved. Details of the Foyle Public Art Project which involved considerable collaboration with the Arts Council were summarised. Information on the consultation for the Ebrington site was provided and it was noted that the arts & culture strategy for the area was nearing completion. The masterplans for both Ebrington and Fort George sites were noted and images of the final project including the historic buildings, the walled City, the bridge, Ebrington and Fort George were presented.

Tony Kennedy joined the meeting.

Council members requested additional information on the vision for a public art gallery, the proposed timescale for completion and the extent of public funding for the project(s), individually and as a whole.

In closing Sir Roy McNulty emphasised the importance of the Ebrington site and highlighted ILEX's overall aim to provide a top class area that would draw people into the city. He indicated he was looking forward to receiving the consultant's report.

Sir Roy and Bill Kirk left the meeting

1 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 9 APRIL 2008*

Council accepted the minute of 9 April 2008 as a true and accurate record of the meeting. The minute was signed by the Chairman.

2 MATTERS ARISING

Page 5, Item 6.1 Terms of Reference – Venice Biennale Work Group

The Chairman noted that Damien Coyle had agreed to represent Council on the Venice Biennale work group.

3 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

4.1 Chairman's Report

The Chairman updated Council on the recent North/South joint plenary meeting which had been held in Belfast at the end of April. She outlined details of discussion on the North/South Cooperation Policy and the Living and Working Conditions of Artists which would be considered under items for approval later in the meeting.

Since the last meeting the Chairman had met with Tom Collins, Head of Corporate Relations at Queens University Belfast and Sian McEaney, Gallery Curator to visit the Silver Exhibition at the Naughton Gallery. She suggested that due to his knowledge/expertise in the area of Opera, Tom Collins might be a valuable contact for the group working on the Opera Strategy.

The Chairman had attended the Sotheby's exhibition at the Waterfront Hall and had spoken at the annual Chairs and Chief Executives Forum. She thanked Philip Hammond, Director of Arts Support and Marlyn Beck, Support Officer for organising this excellent event which had included high profile speakers and interesting client related presentations. Council noted the event had attracted considerable interest from larger organisations and that efforts to encourage involvement of smaller organisations in the future would be required.

In addition, the Chairman and Chief Executive had visited the H & W Drawing Offices with Rita Duffy, Chairman RUA. A further visit was in the process of being arranged with Linda Wilson, Director of Arts and Culture and Hazel Campbell, Head of Arts at DCAL. They had also attended a meeting with Edgar Jardine, Deputy Secretary, Linda Wilson, Director of Arts and Culture and Hazel Campbell, Head of Arts at DCAL to discuss and finalise the business plan for 2008/09.

The Chairman had also had lunch with Linda Wilson, Director of Arts and Culture. During the month she had been the guest speaker at a funding raising Ulster Orchestra ladies lunch at the Merchant Hotel and attended a Chairs' Forum in camera dinner at the Dunadry Inn where the guest had been Minister Peter Robinson.

The Chairman told Council that member's appraisal meetings were now completed and she was in the process of writing up the reports. These would be circulated to Council members for approval prior to despatch to DCAL. Council was reminded that the Permanent Secretary, Paul Sweeney and Director of Arts and Culture, Linda Wilson would be attending the latter part of the meeting in June.

4.2 Meetings and Events to 12 June 2008*

The Chairman highlighted the dates of Lottery, Grants & Capital, Audit, Remuneration & Staffing and Policy & Planning committee meetings scheduled for the beginning of June.

4.3 Attendance Record*

The attendance records were noted.

4.4 ACNI Board's Annual Work Plan 2007/08*

The work plan was noted. Dates for the rest of 2008/09 would be finalised by June.

4.5 Complaints and Reviews Update*

Since the last Council meeting one review had been received. The matter had been considered by a review panel chaired by the Chairman and including two independent advisors. The panel had agreed with the Chief Executive's decision and the review had not been upheld.

4.6 Freedom of Information (Fol) Update*

Two Fol requests had been received since the last meeting. Further details on the request for information on lease payments were provided by the Director of Corporate Services, Paul Burns.

4.7 Action List arising from Council meeting of 9 April 2008*

The action list was noted.

4.8 Register of Hospitality and Events*

Council members were asked to continue to provide details of attendance at relevant arts events for the register.

4.9 Chairman's Priorities

No items were prioritised.

6 CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT*

6.1 FOI Exemption Section 43: Commercial Interest

6.2 Creative Youth Partnership (CYP)

The Chief Executive advised Council that since writing her report all the education and library boards had signed up to support the CYP programme.

6.3 Drama Strategy

Council was told that the implementation of the drama strategy was underway and working well. The Chairman asked about the position of the Youth Lyric and the Chief Executive undertook to report at the next meeting of Council.

6.4 Stranmillis

The Chief Executive said she was still hopeful that the artists' studio project at Stranmillis College would proceed.

6.5 CAL Committee

Council noted the increased number of requests for information and attendance at meetings of the CAL committee. The Chief Executive indicated that the committee had shown particular interest in operational details and there was a possibility they might set up a committee to enquire into the funding of arts and sport.

6.6 Staffing/Recruitment Update

The Chief Executive advised Council of the resignation of Robert Collins, Arts Development Officer for Music, Opera and Bands. The Chairman acknowledged the loss of another well respected officer and extended Council's best wishes for the future.

6.7 Meetings & Events

The meetings and events attended by the Chief Executive since the last meeting were noted.

7 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

7.1 Communications Strategy & Operational Plan 2008/09*

The strategy and recommendation of the Policy and Planning Committee were noted. Council was advised that the development of additional strategies for media and advocacy were underway. It was anticipated these would be presented to the Committee at its next meeting in June.

Council accepted the recommendation of the Committee and approved the communications strategy and operational plan for 2008/09.

7.2 Council Members' Expenses*

Council noted that the Policy and Planning Committee had considered the paper on reimbursement of Council members' expenses. No issues arose regarding the document circulated.

Council accepted the recommendation of the Policy & Planning Committee and approved the guidelines for reimbursement of Council members' expenses.

7.3 Final Business Plan 2008/09*

Council was advised that the Business Plan circulated had been considered and recommended for approval by the Policy & Planning Committee. The Committee would continue to monitor the business plan on an on-going basis throughout the year and the executive would report on achievements at performance review in 2009. The Chairman and Chief Executive had also discussed and finalised the business plan with the Deputy Secretary, Edgar Jardine.

The Final Business Plan 2008/09 was approved by Council.

7.4 Living & Working Conditions of Artists*

The Chairman told Council that the paper had been discussed in detail at the most recent North/South Plenary meeting. A summary of the discussion at the joint plenary meeting was provided. Council noted that it had been agreed that the paper would be presented to both Councils separately, for consideration and recommendation. An Chomhairle Ealaíon had since agreed to proceed with the study.

Nick Livingston, Director of Strategic Development highlighted pertinent points regarding the study, reiterating its importance. He confirmed that cost estimates were based on an anticipated survey size of 770 artists, and that primary research costs would be 120,000 euro of which he recommended that ACNI contributed one-third, circa £31,500 sterling on condition that a statement of value for money was prepared, a clear research protocol defined and a work plan and approvals process be established.

Council discussed several aspects of the study including the working title of the study and it was considered that the term 'working practices' would be more appropriate. The Director of Strategic Development explained the provenance of the title but agreed to discuss the possibility of changing it with colleagues in An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

Council agreed with the recommendation to proceed with the study subject to the conditions outlined.

7.5 North/South Cooperation Policy*

Philip Hammond, Director of Arts Support, referred Council to the paper circulated. He indicated that the document had been discussed at the recent North/South joint plenary session where it had been proposed that the approval of both arts councils would be required. In response to a question from Council he clarified that the partnership between the two Councils was long standing and that a plan of work was already in place. The majority of the work would be undertaken by the executive and contact would be maintained through regular meetings of the two executives. The annual joint plenary session of the Councils would be preserved. Council requested circulation of the strategy/work plan for the joint activity as well as regular update reports against the plan.

The North/South Coordination Policy was accepted by Council on the basis that a strategic plan for reporting would be forthcoming

Philip Hammond, Director of Arts Support left the meeting.

7.6 Council & Committee Dates 2008/09*

The Chairman told Council that discussion on the dates for 2008/09 would be deferred until the June meeting by which time the dates would have been considered and agreed by the various committees.

8 ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & NOTING

8.1 Delegated Decisions*

The delegated decisions for SIAP and Awards for All were noted by Council. Lorraine McDowell, Director of Operations clarified reasons for the decision on the Festival of Fools application.

8.2 Capital Projects Report*

Lorraine McDowell, Director of Operations referred to appendix A which itemised capital expenditure to be administered by ACNI on behalf of DCAL for the period 2008/11. She highlighted variations between the DCAL and ACNI profiles indicating that ACNI figures had been based on more recent cash flow projections from clients. She told Council that funds not expended would have to be surrendered in June this year, with a new bid having to be submitted by the Department to secure funding for the following financial year. She also advised Council that the figures detailed in the report circulated had since changed.

Council discussed the revised version of the monthly update report on progress of capital projects, appendix B and agreed that additional information was required. A meeting to review the content of the report would be organised with the Director of Operations and Council members.

Details of the additional £1m to be confirmed for OMAC would be presented to Council at its July meeting.

8.3 Complaints & Reviews Annual Report*

Lorraine McDowell, Director of Operations said there was nothing further to add to the information presented in the report. Council accepted the report as circulated.

8.4 Premium Payments Scheme Evaluation*

Nick Livingston, Director of Strategic Development summarised the conclusions arising from the interim survey on the premium payments scheme. He indicated that there had been a 50% response rate to the questionnaire which is considered high given that the total number of awards made was relatively low. Notwithstanding, he said that information drawn from the report had been worthwhile in gauging its overall success and providing tangible and positive evidence of the Council's commitment to its Statutory Duty under S75. The requirement for consistent data collection by clients as part of the mechanism for monitoring of results was also noted. The Chairman thanked Nick Livingston for the report.

8.5 Risk Register*

Paul Burns, Director of Corporate Services told Council that the risk register had been considered and accepted by the Audit Committee at its meeting in April

9 COMMITTEES

9.1 Audit Committee

9.1.1 Minute of meeting – 28 January 2008

Council accepted the minute which had been confirmed by the Committee at its meeting on the 21 April 2008. The Chairman, Tony Kennedy reiterated the committee's commitment to comply with the new guidelines issued by the Treasury.

9.1.2 Verbal Update of meeting – 21 April 2008

Tony Kennedy, Chairman of the Committee outlined items considered at the last audit committee meeting. He referred to a presentation on internal audit risk management which had been made at a recent meeting of NDPB Audit Committee Chairs and advised Council of the Department's intention to establish a common system for risk management. He indicated that further discussion of related issues would be required. Council was also made aware that Rodney Allen had joined the Committee as the representative from the NIAO.

10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 FOI Exemption Section 43: Commercial Interest

10.2 June Meeting – Permanent Secretary

Council was reminded that the Permanent Secretary, Paul Sweeney and the Director of Arts & Culture, Linda Wilson would join Council for the latter part of the meeting in June. The Chairman agreed to identify issues for discussion and circulate these to Council in advance of the meeting.

11 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting of Council was confirmed as **Wednesday 11 June 2008**. The meeting would be held at MacNeice House at 5pm.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 5.30pm.

RESERVED MATTERS:

FOI Exemption Section 43: Commercial Interest
Item 6.1, pgs 3/4; Item 8.5, pg 6; Item 10.1, pgs 6/7

Signed: _____
Rosemary Kelly
(Chairman)

Date: _____
11 June 2008