

MINUTES

Board Meeting 27 November 2023 10.00 – 14.00 Waverley Gate Board Room

Present:

Robert Wilson (RW)	Chair
Malath Abbas (MaA)	Board Member
Muslim Alim (MuA)	Board Member
Yahya Barry (YB)	Board Member
Patrick Brown (PB)	Board Member
Norah Campbell (NC)	Board Member
Duncan Cockburn (DC)	Board Member
Stephanie Fraser (SF)	Board Member
Philip Long (PL)	Board Member
Carol Main (CM)	Board Member
Elizabeth Partyka (EP)	Board Member
David Strachan (DS)	Board Member
Heather Stewart (HS)	Board Member
Louise Wilson (LW)	Board Member

In Attendance:

Iain Munro (IM)	Chief Executive
Anne Langley (AL)	Executive Director, Operations (for items 5 onwards)
Iain Stevenson (IS)	Director, Finance (for item 5)
Anne McFadden (AM)	Office Services Manager (for item 6)
Lyndon Jones (LJ)	Minutes

1.	Apologies and declarations relevant to the agenda
1.1	There were no apologies for the meeting.
1.2	There were no declarations relevant to the agenda.
2.	Previous minutes

2.1	The minutes of the 27 September meeting were approved as an accurate record.
2.2	<p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>At the previous meeting, approval was provided by the Board on two Screen awards. There is an ongoing discussion involving one award that would require Screen Scotland to provide a further uplift to allow the project to complete. As the major public funder in the project, the Board was requested to provide authority to allow the Screen Committee to have final approval of the increase.</p> <p>All were content with the approach and details would be reported through the Screen Committee minutes.</p>
3.	Committee updates
3.1	<p>Audit & Risk Minutes – 24 August</p> <p>The Board had been provided with a verbal update at the September meeting and the Minutes were provided today for the formal record. There were no questions.</p>
3.1.1	<p>Audit & Risk Agenda – 16 November</p> <p>Given timing of the Committee meeting close to this Board meeting, the formal Minutes of the meeting were not yet available and would be presented at the next Board meeting. Meantime PB gave a verbal update, speaking to the meeting agenda.</p> <p>The main focus of the meeting was the finalisation of the Annual Report and Accounts for Creative Scotland and the National Lottery Distribution Fund, both are on the Board agenda for final Board approval. The Committee continued to review the suite of Creative Scotland policies and made some proposals on updates. The Internal Audit Plan was brought to the November meeting to allow a longer lead time.</p>
3.1.2	<p>Annual Report of the Audit & Risk Committee</p> <p>The annual report provided the Board with assurance that it was operating and performing effectively.</p> <p>The Board thanked the Committee and accepted the report.</p>
3.2	<p>Finance & General Purposes Committee minutes – 11 September</p> <p>The Board had been provided with a verbal update at the September meeting and the Minutes were provided today for the formal record. There were no questions.</p>
3.2.1	<p>Finance & General Purposes Committee agenda – 1 November</p> <p>Given timing of the Committee meeting close to this Board meeting, the formal Minutes of the meeting were not yet available and would be presented at the next Board meeting. Meantime EP gave a verbal update, speaking to the meeting agenda.</p> <p>The Committee had undertaken its annual review of its Terms of Reference and were presented to the Board for approval (which was given). The Management Accounts report format had been reviewed and, in discussion with the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, a revised template would be produced to provide further clarity for the Committee.</p>

	<p>Also reviewed was the travel data for the past year. In understanding the data, the Board were informed of the proposal that Carbon budgets would be produced for each department to enable them to understand their travel impacts in greater detail, along with the Leadership Team agreeing a ban on internal mainland flights. The Board also recognised that travel costs had increased, which also impacted on budget provision and would continue to need careful management. The Estates Strategy was reviewed and the Committee provided their input which would be discussed later in agenda item 6. Also, an update on EDI would be provided to the Committee today at an additional single agenda item meeting taking place after the Board meeting.</p>
3.2.2	<p>Annual Report of the Finance & General Purposes Committee The annual report provided the Board with assurance that it was operating and performing effectively.</p> <p>The Board thanked the Committee and accepted the report.</p>
3.3	<p>Screen Committee agenda – 14 November Given timing of the Committee meeting close to this Board meeting, the formal Minutes of the meeting were not yet available and would be presented at the next Board meeting. Meantime DS gave a verbal update, speaking to the meeting agenda.</p> <p>The Committee reflected on the release of the outstanding budget for 2023/24 from the Scottish Government and how that would be used. They also had the first of the 'spotlight' moments from the Heads of Department with Cheryl Conway, Head of Screen Commission providing a full report on the work the team undertake. The Committee received an update on the draft Screen Strategy which would be shared with the Board for approval at the February meeting. The Board requested enough time to be able to review fully. External engagement continues with key stakeholders on the value of Screen.</p>
4.	Chief Executive Report
	<p>The Board discussed the confirmation by the Scottish Government of the remaining 2023/24 budget and await details of the 2024/25 budget on 19 December. Members welcomed the First Minister announcement to build the culture budget by an additional £100m in five years, recognising its potential to help address the needs of the sector. However, ongoing pressures were dominating sector energy and focus and negatively impacting delivery. The refresh of the SG Culture Strategy Action Plan would be important to point a way forward from SG on the expectations attached to the £100m. The CEEAC Committee scrutiny was helpful in enabling the issues to be highlighted and discussed.</p> <p>The proposed Creative Scotland pay award had been approved by the Scottish Government and was in line with their two-year offer. The process continues with the Unions who would ballot members.</p> <p>The Board also noted the Multi Year update, with the assessment period now underway.</p>

	<p>The final item from the report was to note the rise in negative and sometimes abusive behaviours towards Creative Scotland staff by people in the sector and their supporters, largely arising from unhappiness with unsuccessful applications. This was increasing given application volumes were higher than ever and success rates were falling.</p> <p>As a result, a new policy on Unacceptable Behaviour towards Creative Scotland Staff has been developed for external publication and reference. This will sit alongside the already published Dignity at Work Policy for how those in the sector should be treated.</p> <p>The Board thanked IM for the update.</p>
5.	Annual Report and Accounts
5.1 & 5.2	<p>Creative Scotland National Lottery Distribution Fund</p> <p>(AL and IS joined for these agenda items) Both sets of accounts, which had been audited by Audit Scotland and reviewed through the Audit & Risk Committee, were presented to the Board for approval. It was noted that the Creative Scotland Annual Report and Accounts consolidated the results of Shorestage Limited, the company that holds the lease of the Bath Road Studio.</p> <p>The narrative around the Annual Report and Accounts was discussed and linked to the Annual Review publication which, together, present the complete picture of Creative Scotland’s work for external consumption. It was agreed that for future sets, the narrative would be shared with the wider Board when available, audit timetable permitting, and the Chair of Audit and Risk Committee would discuss this further with the Executive.</p> <p>The Board approved both sets of the Accounts for laying before the Holyrood and Westminster Parliaments.</p>
6.	Estates Strategy
	<p>(AL remained and AM joined for this agenda item) The paper had been reviewed and updated following the discussion at the Finance and General Purposes Committee and was presented to the Board as an update and request for a decision on the strategic approach to selecting the future Edinburgh office base. All NDPBs were reviewing their estate and seeking opportunities for sharing and to reduce costs overall, as part of the Scottish Government Public Sector Reform programme. In reviewing the strategy there are various considerations around location, efficiencies, effectiveness, and the use of the public estate.</p> <p>The position on the Glasgow office has been secured through a shared space with Registers of Scotland at St. Vincent Plaza which was a positive outcome and the Board looked forward to hearing how the venue works and develops through use. The lease on the Edinburgh Office is now a priority focus and the potential options to be scoped were presented to the Board. Creative Scotland is part of the Public</p>

	<p>Sector Estates Forum which seeks to co-ordinate opportunities with other public bodies across the public sector estate. The timescales for other organisations are variable but focussing on a public sector solution offers the best way forward.</p> <p>The Board discussed the paper and were content with the direction of travel to review options in the public estate, whilst being able to look at efficiencies on space needs and usage requirements. Whilst doing this, Creative Scotland would continue to develop the broader Smarter Working approach which includes the scope to work in other 'Public Sector Hubs' to reflect the geographical breadth of the work of Creative Scotland and with key partners.</p>
7.	Board and Committee Meeting Schedule 2024/25
	<p>(AL remained for this agenda item)</p> <p>The timetable of Board and Committee meetings for 2024/25 was discussed. Noting some minor adjustment in dates, the schedule was agreed by the Board. The Chair noted it would be helpful with arrangements if Board members were able to clear the day for Board meetings, to allow for greater flexibility on timings and location.</p> <p>The dates would be finalised and circulated.</p>
8.	Any Other Business
	<p>IM noted that Creative Scotland was being heavily lobbied to make a statement regarding the conflict in Gaza. The Board agreed that Creative Scotland was not a political body and should make no statement. It was noted this was in line with other public bodies, including cultural equivalents across the UK.</p>
9.	Dates of next meetings
	<p>Board call on Teams (to discuss Draft Budget for 2024/25) 20 December 10.00 – 11.00</p> <p>Board meeting 1 February 2024 10.00 – 14.00</p>

Rebecca Wilson