

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 10th December 2014

11am, Wednesday 10th December 2014

Northern Ireland Screen, Alfred House, Alfred Street, Belfast

Present: Rotha Johnston (Chair), Michael Kuhn, James Penny, Laurence McKeown, Ian Parsley, Sinead McCartan, Adeline Dinsmore, Mike Catto, Fiona MacMillan, Aodán MacPóilin, Tim McKane

In attendance: Richard Williams (CEO), Linda Martin (Head of Finance), Andrew Reid (Head of Production), Moyra Lock (Head of Marketing), Bernard McCloskey (Head of Education), Áine Walsh (Head of ILBF), Marie Shivers (minutes)

Apologies: Jennifer Johnston, Cynthia Smith, DCAL, Arthur Scott, DCAL

Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts were declared.

1.0 Minutes of the Board meeting of 24th September 2014

1.1 The minutes of the September meeting were agreed and signed.

1.2 The CEO updated the Board on the status of action points noting that: further work is needed on the review of representation of women in the sector and, together with Fiona MacMillan, Richard will bring this to the next meeting; an encouraging message from DCMS around future funding for ILBF/USBF, with the details to be confirmed after the general election; we hope the Secretary of State for Culture will visit Belfast in 2015 as he was not able to fit in a visit in 2014; the CEO and Linda Martin met with Permanent Secretary Peter May to discuss the DCAL 15/16 funding cuts.

All other action points were completed.

Chairwoman's business

2.0 The Chairwoman updated the Board on the current re-appointments and recruitment of new members noting that the Minister's decision was still pending. She is hoping to have an update by the end of the week.

2.1 The Chairwoman and CEO briefed Nelson McCausland in his new position as Chair of the Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee.

2.2 The Chairwoman and CEO had met with a number of MPs to brief on the BBC's Charter Renewal for 2016. These discussions are ongoing and further briefings will be carried out in the New Year.

3.0 Northern Ireland Screen Funding 2015-16

- 3.1 The Chairwoman noted that Invest NI funding is secured for 14/15 but that there was less certainty around Invest NI budget for 15/16. However, the working assumption remains that there is budget available to deliver Opening Doors in full.
- 3.2 The Chairwoman reported to the Board on the DCAL funding cuts noting that all organisations affected had been notified of the possibility of 50% cuts and asked for clarification on the implications of cuts at this scale. The CEO outlined the complex history and structure of DCAL stressing the catch 22 that strong alignment with the Programme for Government had led to increased project funding over the years. But that project funding disappears when departmental budgets are cut. The DCAL Consultation process has a deadline of 29 December. Responses from 'ordinary people' about the value to them of these organisations are crucial to getting the message across. A meeting of the Board may be required in the New Year to agree the allocation of DCAL budget across the various activities and organisations. In the meantime, the Chairwoman and CEO indicated that they would continue to press for a reasonable budget settlement from DCAL.
- 3.3 It was agreed that all potentially impacted organisations should be encouraged to engage with DCAL's Budget Consultation and that they should be advised that the opinions and experience of beneficiaries and users should be prioritised ahead of the organisation's own views.

4.0 CEO's Report

- 4.1 The CEO flagged up recent good news. The recent Arts Show piece was a notable celebration of the film sector; the two Academy Award long-list nominations for NI shorts Boogaloo and Graham and SLR were a strong endorsement of our talent base and development activity; Donna Gage, an MIA student, was recently awarded a National Film and Television School Scholarship; and Dungannon Film Club won the Engholm Prize for Film Society of the Year at the prestigious Cinema For All Film Society of the Year Awards in Sheffield. In addition to these, ROAD was the most watched show on BBC NI in the month it was aired.
- 4.2 The CEO informed the Board that the use of the Britvic Factory had fallen through causing the loss of a large-scale project, Book of the Dead. Large-scale production facilities will be covered later in the meeting.
- 4.3 The Performance Indicator Report was reviewed with no major comments made.
- 4.4 The Investment Report was discussed. Despite the loss of Book of the Dead, the CEO expressed no concern regarding allocating the full 14/15 budget. He noted that the Arts Council's wish for Northern Ireland Screen to support The Space had led to a commitment to the production by Flickerpix of an animated version of Seamus Heaney's translation of Beowulf.

5.0 Finance, Audit and Governance

- 5.1 The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee reported to the Board noting that the Committee will pick an item off the risk register at each meeting to discuss in detail. Third Party Organisations (TPOs) were discussed at the last meeting and outcomes from this discussion resulted in a decision that the Northern Ireland Screen Executive will attend at least one Board meeting of each TPO a year as an observer. ILBF/USBF funding will be discussed at the next meeting.
- 5.2 Internal Audit reports were on track with one currently underway and two to begin in the New Year.

6.0 Management Accounts to 30 November 2014

- 6.1 The Management Accounts were approved by the Board. Linda Martin confirmed that recoupment is reinvested in the Screen Fund up to a maximum of £890k over the 4 year strategy.

7.0 Review of Risk Register

- 7.1 DCAL and Invest NI funding and, as a result, CLC expansion remain the key issues on the register. CLC expansion could be amended to show red right across the table.

8.0 Chair of SRC Report

- 8.1 The Chairwoman as Chair of the SRC reported on issues from the last meeting noting that the Committee had looked at the accounts and funding commitments in detail and had agreed that funding templates should be amended to include detail on the alignment of the investment with the Strategy.

9.0 Committee Updates

- 9.1 EPWG - Adeline Dinsmore noted that the funding cuts had been the main point at the recent meeting and that teachers' responses were extremely important for the consultation process.
- 9.2 Investment Committee – Michael Kuhn mentioned The Survivalist, noting that this is a remarkable piece of work.
- 9.3 ILBF - Although there is no guarantee of funding for 16/17 until after the election, Aodan thanked the CEO for making the ILBF more visible within DCMS. Five projects were awarded at the last investment meeting and the Fund is on target to spend its £3m by the end of March.

9.4 USBF – The CEO reported the same position as the ILBF and that the next meeting will take place later this week.

9.5 Skills Panel/Training - CEO noted concerns regarding launch of the 3rd Aim High due to issues with Creative Skillset funding. He also noted strong Invest NI support for the skills agenda.

10.0 Any Other Business

10.1 No other business was discussed.

11.0 Education Presentation

11.1 James Penny gave a presentation on 'How are TV Programmes Funded and How do they get Made?'

12.0 Date of Next Meeting

12.1 The next Board meeting is presently scheduled for Tuesday 10th March 2015.

<i>Point</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>To be actioned by</i>
1.2	Further work to be completed on the representation of women in the industry	RW/ FMacM
3.2	Set up meeting with DETI Minister in New Year	
8.1	All funds' funding templates should be amended to include the section on alignment with the Strategy	

Signed:  _____

Date: 10/3/2015