

MINUTES OF BOARD MEETING: 16TH March 2010

10:30am Tuesday 16th March 2010

Northern Ireland Screen, Alfred House, Belfast

Present: Richard Hill (Chair), Tim McKane, Anne Cormican, Terry Loane, James Penny, Mairead Regan, Peter Quinn, Maurice Hayes, Ruth McCance, Roger Austin, Philip Morrow

In attendance: Richard Williams (CEO), Andrew Reid (Head of Production), Linda Martin (Head of Finance), Moyra Lock (Head of Marketing), Áine Walsh (Head of ILBF), Marie Shivers (minutes), Arthur Scott (DCAL – Observer)

Apologies: Kate Smith, ~~Timmy Loane~~, Bernard McCloskey (Head of Education), Elsie Brown (Operations Manager)



CEO Remuneration

Northern Ireland Screen executive absent

0.1 The Board agreed a path to bring the CEO's remuneration arrangements in line with the requirements of the department.

0.2 The Chair to take this forward with the CEO.

Staff members and Arthur Scott returned to the meeting

1.0 Chairman's Opening Remarks

1.1 No conflicts of interest were raised.

1.2 The Chair noted the recent award nominations for Northern Ireland Screen supported projects and that Game of Thrones was going to series. He commended the CEO and his staff for their part in these positive developments.

1.3 He reported that the Vice Chair appointment was in its final stages and that an announcement was imminent.

1.4 The Chair asked for signed appraisal assessment sheets from all Board members and informed the Board that one to one appraisals would be undertaken with all Board members during the coming financial year.

2.0 Minutes of the Board meeting of 24th November 2009

2.1 On point 6.13 Arthur Scott asked for the minutes to be amended to reflect that DCAL or DFP approval had not been given.

2.2 The minutes of the last Board meeting were agreed and approved.

3.0 CEO's Report

- 3.1 The CEO reported that the most pressing issue remained clarification of funding from Invest NI following the economic appraisal. Results are expected mid April. The CEO informed the Board that the indications from Invest NI and DETI were much less positive than in the preceding weeks with emphasis being placed on the scarcity of available funds.
- 3.2 The CEO indicated that he had replied to the UK Film Council with regard to their proposal to cease core funding of Northern Ireland Screen and that he had met with John Woodward (UKFC, CEO) and was optimistic that we would secure some level of ongoing funding. The DCAL minister has also written to the UKFC on this matter.
- 3.3 The CEO expressed concern that Northern Ireland Screen was not taking a leading role in policy development for the creative industries. After a discussion it was agreed that Northern Ireland Screen should where possible seek to lead the debate. It was agreed that the CEO should approach Declan Kelly.
- 3.4 Maurice Hayes asked if HBO's use of the Paint Hall effectively locked out other production. While it was acknowledged that there was a degree of truth in this, Andrew Reid confirmed that there were other spaces available to Northern Ireland Screen as the need arose.

4.0 Management Accounts to January 2010

- 4.1 The accounts were currently running a surplus, but it was reported that this will disappear as we approach the year-end as we are on track to spend all of the awarded funding. The management accounts were approved by the Board.

5.0 Risk Register

- 5.1 INI funding remains the main risk and this will continue until funding is secured in April. Corporate governance of the TPOs was introduced for the first time and was categorised as a red risk because TPOs (Belfast Film Festival, Nerve Centre, Northern Visions etc) are required to raise their governance standards in line with DCAL's requirements. The CEO proposed a graduated approach to strengthening these organisations' governance arrangements taking account of the size of these organisations and their limited resources.
- 5.2 The Board approved the Risk Register.

6.0 Performance Indicators

- 6.1 The CEO reported his intention to rationalise the Performance Indicator report. The Board suggested a red/amber/green status as a possibility to aid clarity. The Board were content with the Performance Indicators.

7.0 Committee Update Reports

Irish Language Broadcast Fund

- 7.1 Gerry Adams's positive announcement of 4 years further funding of the Irish Language Broadcast Fund was reported and the Chair and Maurice Hayes, the ILBF Committee Chair acknowledged Northern Ireland Screen's gratitude for this timely intervention.
- 7.2 The CEO also welcomed this announcement but also noted that he had not yet received confirmation of the funding allocation from DCMS, the department responsible for providing the funds.
- 7.3 Áine gave a summary of ILBF work and noted that £1.3 million had been awarded at the last investment committee meeting at the end of February.
- 7.4 The ILBF Chair noted the importance and success of holding their last investment committee meeting in Derry.
- 7.5 Áine reported that the Celtic Media Festival will be held in Newry from 21st April with over 500 delegates confirmed to attend.

Investment Committee

- 7.6 The Committee met on 4th March and awarded funding to two projects; Big City Park from local company Sixteen South for CBeebies to be filmed in Ormeau Park and Christopher and His Kind from Mammoth Screen. Mammoth has very recently set up an office in Belfast.
- 7.7 The remaining £30,000 in the fund has been transferred to the Product Development Fund and allocated to Flickerpix for a six minute taster tape for a Sky One animation series.
- 7.8 The Board discussed whether Game of Thrones would have a negative impact on the availability of local crew for other projects. Andrew Reid assured the Board that as some crew preferred not to work on the longer term projects, there was always availability for the shorter term productions. He also detailed Northern Ireland Screen's production guide which details the crew, and reported that new talent was coming through. He also reported that Northern Ireland Screen was taking a greater role in matching local crew to available jobs to ensure that we can extract the best opportunities possible.

Marketing Committee

- 7.9 It was agreed that the Marketing Committee should be stood down in favour of focusing on the new 'Engagement Committee' which will concentrate on maximising involvement of and engagement with the local Assembly, local Ministers and local government departments. External marketing will be reported to the Board through the CEO's report.

- 7.10 The Committee acknowledged the great coverage on TV and radio for Game of Thrones.
- 7.11 Tim McKane will chair the Engagement Committee and would welcome any ideas on the running of it.

Education Policy Working Group

- 7.12 Roger Austin advised the Board that the Education Committee were working closely with the C2K project procurement to ensure that the C2K hardware which is refreshed every 4 years will be fit for purpose for Moving Image Arts teaching levels.
- 7.13 Roger Austin provided a summary on educational developments. He stated that the expanded subject requirement for 14 and 16 year olds with the need for vocational subjects would create strong demand for Moving Image Arts. In turn this will create demand for the teaching of teachers and the Creative Learning Centres will be key to providing this training.
- 7.14 He reported that Northern Ireland Screen was to meet Mervyn Storey, Chair of the Education Committee, next week to raise the profile of the CLCs and the funding requirements.
- 7.15 Roger thought that there were a number of good stories on the education side that could be fed to the Engagement Committee.

Finance and Audit Committee

- 7.16 Peter Quinn, Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee reported that the Committee had met that morning and gave a brief outline of what was discussed. He noted that the Committee had approved the Management Accounts and the Risk Register.
- 7.17 He reported that the Committee was content for Northern Ireland Screen to continue the negotiations on the Paint Hall lease and noted that the Game of Thrones announcement had had an obvious impact on leverage within these negotiations. The Board was content with this course of action.

Skillset

- 7.18 Mairead Regan gave the Board a brief outline of Skillset business. A survey of Digital Circle members was currently taking place on the provision of courses. The Ulster Media Show, run by the Skillset Academy, will be taking place on 23 June. Two bids have been submitted to DEL, one on communication radio and the other multi-platform for radio journalists.

8.0 Operating Plan 2010-2011

- 8.1 The CEO briefed the Board on the draft Operating Plan noting that it had been reformatted with a view to being more easily understood and with a view to it being

a public document. When it is finalised it will be published and available to download from the website. All economic figures could change as a result of the Invest NI appraisal and will be adjusted accordingly in April if needed.

- 8.2 The Board approved the draft Operating Plan for 2010-2011.

9.0 Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund

- 9.1 The Chair reported to the Board on his meeting with the DCAL Minister on renewed funding for the Irish Language Broadcast Fund and a new Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund. He reported that the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund had a proposed budget of £1 million a year for 5 years projected to begin this coming financial year.
- 9.2 The Chair outlined his intention to Chair the initial steering group which would be set up along similar lines to the ILBF with broadcaster representation critical.
- 9.3 The Chair of the ILBF reported that his committee was available to assist and that it was important that interaction between the funds was encouraged.
- 9.4 The Board agreed that the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund should be administered by Northern Ireland Screen.

10.0 Any Other Business

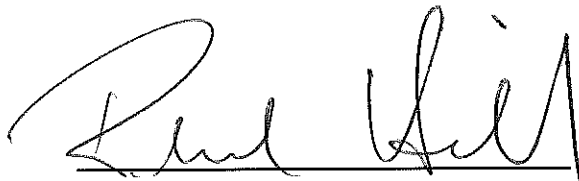
- 10.1 Peter Quinn expressed strong concern that there was not a sufficiently coherent and long term focus on how to develop the screen industries. In particular, he raised concern at the lack of focus on creative clusters which were universally accepted as the key to developing the creative industries.
- 10.2 He expressed further concern that the Independent Review of Economic Policy did not mention the Creative Industries. Tim McKane agreed to take this forward through the Engagement Committee.
- 10.3 Arthur Scott offered to engage with Northern Ireland Screen on how to take the Creative Industries policy debate forward.
- 10.4 James Penny expressed the view that fledgling clusters were developing and noted the significance of key individuals like Mark Huffam. Phil Morrow confirmed the need for local development.
- 10.5 The CEO requested the Board's approval to support where possible Derry/Londonderry's City of Culture bid. The Board was content to give support.
- 10.6 The CEO also informed Board members that a launch of the Digital Film Archive was taking place at the Queens Film Theatre that afternoon and all were welcome to attend.
- 10.7 The meeting was closed.

11.0 Date of Next Meeting

11.1 The next Board meeting will be held at 10:30am on Tuesday 29th June 2010.

<i>Point</i>	<i>Detail</i>	<i>To be action by</i>
0.2	Chair to take forward remuneration issues with CEO	Chair
3.3	CEO to contact Declan Kelly re Northern Ireland Screen taking a leading role in policy development for the creative industries	CEO
7.17	Northern Ireland Screen to continue negotiations on the Paint Hall lease	CEO/Andrew Reid
8.1	Finalise Operating Plan, publish and make available on website	Marie Shivers/ Marketing
9.2	Chair to put together a Committee/steering group on the Ulster Scots Broadcast Fund	Chair
10.2	Peter Quinn expressed concern that the Independent Review of Economic Policy did not mention the Creative Industries. Tim McKane agreed to take this forward through the Engagement Committee	Tim McKane
10.3	Arthur Scott offered to engage with Northern Ireland Screen on how to take the Creative Industries policy debate forward.	Arthur Scott

Signed:



Date:

29/6/10