

Tuesday, 30 October 2018

Bethan Sayed AM
Chair
Culture, Welsh Language and Communications Committee
National Assembly for Wales
Cardiff Bay
Cardiff CF99 1NA

Dear Bethan

Thank you for your letter of 25 October 2018. You asked for additional information on four matters. Please find my comments below.

Arts & Business Cymru

In February 2017, Arts & Business Cymru (A&BC) informed the Committee that it was experiencing financial difficulties. In response, the Arts Council offered to provide a fixed term period of transitional funding to allow A&BC to stabilise itself. A&BC's view was that if funding could be provided for a two-year period (at £70,000 per year), this would allow sufficient time for the organisation to move to a self-sustaining business model. Funding was confirmed on that basis and is additional to other project funding (such as the Arts Council's support for A&BC's Fundraising Mentorship programme).

We are now in the second year of the two-year transition period. In year one, A&BC's business plan indicated that self-sufficiency would be achievable through increases in non-public funding. However, the current business plan suggests that the organisation cannot be self-sustaining from 2019/20 without further public funding. This is somewhat at odds with the rationale for our original support.

A&BC is currently seeking support from the Welsh Government and meetings have taken place with the Culture Minister. We understand that the Minister has explored with A&BC the potential of an incentivised "public private" partnership.

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Rydym yn croesawu gohebiaeth yn y Gymraeg a'r Saesneg, ni fydd gohebu drwy gyfrwng y Gymraeg yn arwain at oedi.
We welcome correspondences in Welsh and English, corresponding in Welsh will not lead to a delay.

We are in regular communication with officials but at this stage cannot confirm how such a proposal might operate. We would hope that a new way forward can be identified by the new year.

Independent Review of Support for Publishing and Literature in Wales

Earlier this month the Culture Minister wrote to us with his conclusions on the Review.

In summary:

- **Wales Book of the Year** – the Minister has determined that Literature Wales should remain the lead organisation for Wales Book of the Year at present. However, he wishes to see a closer and more strategic partnership with the Welsh Books Council and other stakeholders.
- **Bursaries** – the Minister has indicated that he believes that separate, good work is already being done by Literature Wales and the Welsh Books Council. However, he sees merit in bringing this activity together to achieve a more unified strategic approach. He is not requiring the delivery of all bursaries by a single organisation, although that is an option the stakeholder organisations could explore.
- **Writers on Tour** – the Minister concludes that Literature Wales should remain the lead organisation for Writers on Tour, but he suggests possible changes to current delivery. Literature Wales should cover reasonable travel and subsistence costs for authors, in line with usual public sector rates. The Minister also suggests that the Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales might consider whether a small budget increase for Writers on Tour is required to facilitate this. We will be discussing this with the Welsh Government.
- **Children and Young People/Literary events** – the Minister has decided that there should be no transfer of funding functions of funding in relation to children and young people and literary events. However, the Minister wishes to see Literature Wales and the Welsh Books Council discussing current arrangements and agreeing how support could be delivered more collaboratively in future.

We welcome the Minister's conclusions.

They move everyone forward constructively from the uncertainty produced by the original Review. We agree that there should be no transfer of functions and support the Minister's view that all the organisations involved need to cooperate more closely in developing the Literature and Publishing sectors. We are now giving careful consideration to how that cooperation should work across the various strands of activity.

Creative Learning through the Arts

Creative Learning through the Arts is our five-year partnership with the Welsh Government designed to embed creativity within the schools-based teaching environment. The programme has a particular emphasis on using creative techniques to raise levels of attainment, and to narrow the attainment gaps between the most and least able pupils.

A full evaluation is taking place alongside the delivery of activity. It will report at the programme's conclusion. We are delighted with the initial outcomes – indeed, the programme has already exceeded our most optimistic expectations.

At the heart of the programme is the **Lead Creative Schools Scheme**. 577 schools are now benefitting from the scheme either as a Lead Creative School themselves or as part of a school-to-school development strand.

This has enabled us to work with:

- 233 Creative Agents, assisting schools to diagnose their developmental needs
- 500 Creative Practitioners, delivering projects in partnership with the teachers
- over 1,000 teachers, who have been trained through the scheme
- around 40,000 learners who have been engaged in the scheme

Feedback from participating schools continues to be very positive with impacts being seen in pupil engagement and attainment, teacher development and whole school change. Increasingly, schools are also telling us that the scheme is helping them to prepare for the introduction in Wales of the new school curriculum.

A highlight this year has been our “take-over” of Tate Exchange in London. We curated an interactive exhibition during the week of 24 – 29 April showcasing the wealth of learning that is resulting from the Scheme. We showcased a series of live projects delivered by schools, creative professionals and pupils drawn from across Wales. We also ran a seminar on “*Measuring Progression in Creativity Skills*” in partnership with the OECD and Welsh Government.

An important part of the Creative Learning programme is the **Experiencing the Arts Fund**. This is about encouraging schools to provide children and young people with opportunities to go ‘one step further’ in their explorations of creative, cultural and arts experiences.

There are two strands of financial support on offer. The first is a simple ‘**Go and See**’ scheme offering funding for straightforward visits to high quality arts events. The second, ‘**Creative Collaborations**’, makes more demands of young people but offers higher levels of funding that will allow schools to pursue more ambitious proposals and and partnerships with the cultural sector.

'Go and See' continues to be a popular fund for schools wanting to attend arts events. As of September 2018, we had awarded 454 Go and See grants, 48 First World War commemoration grants and 60 Creative Collaborations.

Funding for the remainder of the published programme is secure. However, the Welsh Government has also approached us to explore the possibility of extending the programme in some form. Discussions are continuing and we hope that these will reach a conclusion in December.

You can view a copy of the Creative Learning annual report for 2016/17 here:

<http://2017.creativelearning.arts.wales/>

Arts & Health

In January 2018 we published a detailed **Mapping report** looking at the full range of Arts & Health activity currently taking place across Wales. You can view a copy of the report here:

<http://www.arts.wales/arts-health-2>

Building on the momentum and interest generated by our report, we are now acting on its 11 recommendations. Key themes and emerging priorities include: mental health, social prescribing, strengthening the evidence base and raising awareness of the well-being benefits of engaging in the arts.

Partnerships remain at the heart of all our Arts & Health work. We have an established partnership with **Welsh NHS Confederation**. This is fundamental in helping to co-ordinate our work with individual Health Boards.

In recent months, the Confederation has written two briefing papers: one a literature review of the available evidence supporting Arts & Health; the other sharing examples of best practice within mental health. Both have been distributed throughout the NHS as well as to Assembly Members.

Last month we joined with **Betsi Cadwaldr University Health Board** to launch a Concordat with Public Health Wales. The result of a series of workshops held across North Wales, it will offer a framework to grow the provision of arts, health and well-being across the region.

We are currently working with **NESTA** and **Y Lab at Cardiff University** to explore commissioning models within Arts & Health. We also want to try and pinpoint the level and type of evidence that health partners require in order to invest in those projects that we believe have the potential to become self-sustaining (such as social prescribing).

The Cross Party Group on Arts & Health re-grouped in September under its new Chair, Jayne Bryant AM. The Arts Council is providing the secretariat to the Group.

A particular focus for us in the current year is to secure seven Arts & Health Coordinator posts, one in each Health Board. We know that where dedicated staff are in place, the arts tend to be deployed better and more imaginatively with greater impact within health and care settings. Discussions are underway with each Health Board to understand how best to use the investment. Each Health Board will be responsible for recruiting and employing the Coordinators. We intend to commission an independent evaluation of the impact.

The Wales Arts for Health and Wellbeing Network continues to gain in authority and we support its development. A website is close to going live. In the autumn, we plan to commission a short film to capture patients' views and participants' experiences of taking part in Arts & Health projects. We're also looking to explore joint PR campaigns (with the Confederation and Public Health Wales) to raise awareness and promote the well-being benefits of the arts more generally.

If you would like more information on any of the above, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

Nick Capaldi

Nick Capaldi
Chief Executive