

Minutes National Council



Date	Wednesday 7 September 2022	
Time	12.30pm - 4.10pm	
Location	Arts Council England, 21 Bloomsbury Street, London	
Present:	Sir Nicholas Serota (Chair)	Chair of Arts Council England
	Helen Birchenough	South West Area Council Chair
	Roni Brown	South East Area Council Chair
	YolanDa Brown	National Council Member
	Bill Bush	National Council Member
	Sukhy Johal MBE	Midlands Area Council Chair
	Ruth Mackenzie CBE	London Area Council Chair
	Elisabeth Murdoch CBE	National Council Member (Items 4-13)
	Andrew Miller MBE	National Council Member (Items 1-11)
	Jamie Njoku-Goodwin	National Council Member
	Abigail Pogson	National Council Member
	Paul Roberts OBE	National Council Member
	Deborah Shaw	National Council Member
	Baroness Fleet (Veronica Wadley) CBE	National Council Member
Apologies:	Kate Willard OBE	North Area Council Chair
Also Present:	Darren Henley CBE	Chief Executive
	Elizabeth Bushell	Executive Director and Chief Financial Officer
	Laura Dyer MBE	Deputy Chief Executive, Places, Engagement and Libraries
	Simon Mellor	Deputy Chief Executive, Arts and Museums
	Mags Patten	Executive Director, Communication and Public Policy
	Francis Runacres MBE	Executive Director, Enterprise and Innovation
	Richard Russell	Executive Director and Chief Operating Officer
	Michelle Dickson	Director, Strategy Arts and Culture
	Nicola Saunders	Director, Business Information and Environmental Responsibility (Item 7)
	Sean Kelly	Senior Officer, CRF Grants (Item 7)
	Abid Hussain	Director, Diversity (Item 11)
	Sarah Posey	Director, Cultural Property (Item 10)
	Michelle Neilson	Personal Assistant to Chief Financial Officer
	Beth Burr	Assistant to Chief Operating Officer
	David Bryant	Senior Governance Officer (minutes)

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members of National Council and the Executive Board to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies were received from Kate Willard.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 2.1 National Council members were asked to declare any interests in matters or connections with any organisations due to be discussed. None were raised.

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 22 JUNE 2022

- 3.1 The minutes for the National Council meeting held on were agreed subject to an amendment to item 12 to make it clear that an update of the AIL/Cultural Gifts website is also planned.

(Elisabeth Murdoch joined the meeting)

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

- 4.1 National Council were asked to note the Action Point Plan outlining progress on outstanding actions.

5. CHAIR AND CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S UPDATE

- 5.1 Sir Nicholas Serota and Darren Henley introduced this item.
- 5.2 Members received an update from Darren on the progress with the DfE Expert Advisory Panel for the Cultural Education Plan to be chaired by Baroness Bull. The panel aims to highlight and promote the importance of high-quality cultural education in schools and tackling disparities in opportunity and outcome. This work is welcomed by both the Education and Cultural Sectors.
- 5.3 It has also been announced that Baroness Sanderson will serve as the independent chair of an advisory panel to develop a new libraries strategy.

- 5.4 National Council were updated on progress with the Independent Review of Inclusion. Meetings have been held with staff reference groups to enable scoping of the work to begin. The supplier leading on the work will be wholly independent.

6. NPO 2023-2026 INVESTMENT PROCESS

- 6.1 Simon Mellor introduced a presentation which outlined and reiterated National Council's role in the NPO process, setting out their decision making thresholds and the role the portfolio will play in helping Arts Council England to achieve the aims of our strategy Let's Create. Members were also reminded of our commitment to create a portfolio which is more balanced in terms of geography, diversity and range of creative and cultural provision.
- 6.2 The importance of adhering to the Nolan principles throughout the decision making process was also emphasised to National Council members.
- 6.3 National Council members were also asked to agree the arrangements for the use of Deputy Chairs at the Area Council Testing and Decision Making meetings. These would involve a designated deputy chairing the meeting in the event of the Chair temporarily needing to leave the room due to conflicts of interest, or acting as lead for the whole meeting in the event of the Chair being ill or absent due to an emergency.
- 6.4 National Council were provided with outline statistics for the applications we had received and informed that the overall picture appeared positive in terms of achieving our key aims and ambitions.
- 6.5 Members were also updated with the proposed communications approach, which would culminate in a press conference at 11am on Wednesday 26th October.
- 6.6 National Council noted the contents of the presentation and also AGREED to allow Area Council Chairs to nominate Deputy Chairs to act as designated stand-ins in the result of any Chair absenteeism. Deputy Chairs will also be invited to the next National Council meeting as a non-voting participant in the event of any Chair's continued absence.

7. RESET AND INNOVATION PROGRAMME

(Nicola Saunders and Sean Kelly joined the meeting)

- 7.1 Francis Runacres delivered this presentation which provided National Council with an overview on the Reset and Innovation Programme and outlined the progress made so far.
- 7.2 National Council were reminded that one of the key aims of Let's Create is to address the fact that the business models of publicly funded organisations often lack the flexibility to address emerging challenges and opportunities. The Dynamism investment principle, had been created in order to encourage cultural organisations to become more agile and responsive to change over the next decade.
- 7.3 The Reset and Innovation programme was designed to continue developing the culture of experimentation and innovation cultural organisations had adopted during the pandemic. It is expected that the programme will launch in the first Quarter of the 2023-24 financial year.
- 7.4 Declining real term public investment has meant that most cultural organisations have been faced with challenges which are likely to be exacerbated in the next few years. Additional issues include wage inflation, energy costs and reductions in consumer spend. The programme will enable Arts Council England to invest in organisations which are exploring new business models, business process re-engineering, or mergers and other organisational restructuring. The programme will consist of a development strand, which provides funding to test ideas, and an implementation strand. Our overall budget for this programme is currently £26.8 million.
- 7.5 National Council were also informed of the other projects and investment Arts Council England set up to support dynamism, such as the Creative Land Trust, the Arts Impact Fund and the Bloomberg Digital Accelerator Programme.
- 7.6 Members asked if the learning from this round would be used to inform future projects, particularly around scaling and replicating the

information gleaned. They were informed that Round 2 would take on board learning from the initial round and new ideas.

- 7.7 Members were additionally assured that all the applications would be subject to quality assurance through thorough assessment.
- 7.8 National Council noted the progress so far and thanked Francis Runacres for the presentation.

(Nicola Saunders and Sean Kelly left the meeting)

8. QUARTERLY INVESTMENT RISK REPORT

- 8.1 Richard Russell introduced this item which updated National Council on the risk profile of the National Portfolio and risk assessment compliance rates at 30 June 2022. Members were also updated on Capital Risk.
- 8.2 National Council noted positively that risk assessments for 100% of National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) were completed in line with our agreed risk process, an increase of 0.6% on the previous quarter. They congratulated the team on achieving such a satisfactory completion rate.

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[Information has been withheld here in line with the requirements of section 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – prejudice to commercial interests. A public authority is entitled to withhold information under this provision where disclosure of that information would be likely to prejudice the commercial interests of any persons or organisations.]

- 8.4 National Council noted the contents of the update.

9. MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT

- 9.1 Liz Bushell introduced this item which presented Arts Council’s second Modern Slavery Statement to National Council for approval.
- 9.2 Members were informed that in the financial year 2020/2021, the Arts Council (together with other public bodies with a budget of £36 million or more) was brought within the scope of the Modern Slavery Statement. The Arts Council must now regularly report on the steps we have taken to prevent modern slavery in our supply chains each financial year. We published our first Statement in September 2021 and we must publish our second Statement for financial year 2021/2022 in September 2022.
- 9.3 Since the first statement was published, we have achieved our stated goals of communicating our employment practices statement to staff and updating our supply terms and conditions.
- 9.4 National Council APPROVED the statement.

10. [.....]

(Sarah Posey joined the meeting)

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*[Information has been withheld here in line with the requirements of **section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 – information intended for future publication.** Under section 22 we are entitled to withhold information until the intended publication date as long as there is a clear intention to publish the details in the future, and where it is reasonable in all the circumstances to maintain the original timetable for publication.]*

(Sarah Posey left the meeting)

11. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION UPDATE

(Abid Hussain joined the meeting)

- 11.1 Abid Hussain and Mags Patten introduced this item which updated National Council on the ongoing equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) activity within Arts Council England.
- 11.2 Members were informed that the latest Equality, Diversity and Inclusion data annual report was published in June and contains detailed information on the diversity of applicants for Arts Council England funding as well as workplace diversity.
- 11.3 A review of the National Lottery Project Grants is also currently being undertaken to assess diversity application trends and success rates, increasing accessibility of current application materials and improving advice giving.
- 11.4 National Council also received updates on the progress with the access scheme for disabled audiences, which has seen the completion of an initial feasibility study, and on the Inclusion Review plans which have been the subject of a tender for a supplier to undertake an independent review of our employment policies and processes, practices, and culture as an employer.

(Andrew Miller left the meeting)

11.5 Members were additionally informed that anonymised audience data for funded organisations should also be available by next year, which will provide valuable insight into which organisations are effectively reaching diverse audiences.

11.6 National Council AGREED to note the update.

(Abid Hussain left the meeting)

12. AREA COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS

12.1 The Chair introduced this item which asked National Council to agree the appointment of one new member to London Area Council and the reappointments of 5 members on South East Area Council.

12.2 National Council AGREED to:

- a) Appoint Councillor Andreas Kirsch to London Area Council from 7th September 2022 – 6th May 2026
- b) Reappoint Louise Blackwell, Stephen Crocker and Celia Davies to South East Area Council until 16 May 2024.
- c) Reappoint Gurvinder Sandher to South East Area Council until 20 November 2025
- d) Reappoint Councillor Alan Waters to South East Area Council until 9 December 2023.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13.1 National Council were informed that Camelot had removed their legal challenge against the Gambling Commission's decision to award the lottery licence to Allwyn; however, their technology partner IGT have not yet reversed their position and their legal challenge remains live.

The meeting concluded at 16:10