



## NOTES

**Board call  
20 December 2023  
10.00 – 11.00  
Via Teams**

### Present:

Robert Wilson (RW)	Chair
Malath Abbas (MA)	Board Member
Muslim Alim (MAL)	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
Kenneth Fowler (KF)	Director, Communications
Anne Langley (AL)	Executive Director, Operations
Ian Stevenson (IS)	Director, Finance
Lyndon Jones (LJ)	Notes

<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies</b>
	There were no apologies. YB, DC and CM would absent themselves from the meeting when the decision on RFO funding is discussed.

<b>2.</b>	<b>Scottish Government Draft Budget 2024 - 25</b>
	<p>The Chair had taken a call from the Cabinet Secretary yesterday evening to discuss the budget outcome. The draft budget included the return of the £6.6m reduction from this financial year, along with a further £6.6m as normally provided for RFO's. The budget outcome was welcomed, particularly in the context of the pressures on public funding. The commitment from the First Minister to an extra £100m support for culture over the next five years was also noted. The Cabinet Secretary highlighted this reflected the Scottish Government's support of culture as a whole. The conversation also touched on positive messaging of the outcome.</p>
<p>2.1 &amp; 2.2</p>	<p><u>Presentation and discussion of draft budget</u></p> <p>In reviewing the draft budget, the Board were asked to note that all spend would be required in-year for 2024/25 and could not form part of the overall reserves picture planned for transition funding as part of the Multi Year programme. The Scottish Government wished to direct the use of the 'returned' £6.6m.</p> <p>A further aspect of the budget was the requirement on all public bodies to deliver operational savings of 5%. This was solely on the operational budget and would principally need to focus on workforce, travel, and estates. The Scottish Government commitment to no compulsory redundancies remained in place until at least March 2025 and there is no central budget provision for voluntary redundancy or early retirement. As the operational activity for Creative Scotland was jointly funded through Grant in Aid and National Lottery, that would help manage the overall approach.</p> <p>Another aspect of the budget was the continuation of the Scottish Government Accountable Officer Template before any funding of scale is released. Lead times for approvals may continue to be challenging when CS is not managing the process. The Board also reflected on the balance of restricted and unrestricted funds. The Board was also keen to pursue cross-portfolio working given culture's wider impacts on society and the economy.</p> <p>The Board discussed that future planning continued to be challenging in the absence of a multiple year budget view.</p> <p>As a final note, the draft budget was still subject to a Parliamentary debate and approval in February.</p>
<p>2.3</p>	<p><u>Approval of RFO and other funding</u></p> <p>The Board were asked to provide early approval of £32,551,169 RFO and £1,067,000 Film Festival/Cultural Cinema budgets (formerly CMI) for 2024/25 to enable communications to be made before Christmas and allow the contracting process to begin in the new year.</p> <p>Whilst there was a discussion and further clarity on the final figures, the Board provided budget approval for those elements.</p>

<b>3.</b>	<b>Communications</b>
	<p>Following on from the initial communications yesterday, there would be an update circulated out of today's Board call to confirm the Board had welcomed the draft budget and the approval of the budgets for the RFOs and Film Festival/Cultural Cinema in 2024/25.</p> <p>It was noted that IM had been invited to give further evidence to the CEEAC Committee of the Scottish Parliament on 11 January 2024, with a written submission to be provided on 5 January.</p>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Any other business</b>
	<p>YB noted his concern that Creative Scotland should publicly be calling for peace, justice and compassion regarding the situation in Gaza. Whilst recognising that strong personal views may be held by various members of the Board and staff body, this was a highly sensitive political matter and as Creative Scotland was not a political body, it was restated that Creative Scotland would not be making a public statement.</p> <p>The Chair thanked everyone for their time and wished them a happy Festive period.</p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Date of next meeting</b>
	<p>Board meeting 1 February 2024 10.00 - 14.00</p>

*Rebel Wilson*