



Fiona Hyslop
Cabinet Secretary for Culture and External Affairs
Scottish Government
St Andrew's House
Regent Road
Edinburgh
EH1 3DG

12 July 2012

Dear Fiona

Thank you for your letter and your introductory comments about the successes and achievements of Creative Scotland in the first 2 years. The Board and staff team have worked hard to undertake a major programme of change and review establishing Creative Scotland as a champion for culture in Scotland. We have been grateful for your support through this period. The model of Creative Scotland is breaking new ground and is attracting considerable interest internationally. Like you though, we recognise there are challenges in moving to the new model. Our choreography of the moves may not have been perfect, but we have been listening to constructive feedback from the sector and we will adjust some of our language and our moves accordingly.

Our Board welcomes your continued support for the direction that we are moving with the Corporate Plan. The review of FXOs is an essential part of moving to a more strategic budget whilst also sustaining the considerable strengths of these agencies through future Lottery investment.

International

We have increased our activity in showcasing and supporting international work exported from Scotland. As part of our budget review we have increased our grant in aid allocations to International work to respond to the potential in this area. Our London 2012 programme is seen by the London 2012 team as one of the strongest in the UK.

We have made good progress with Glasgow Life in agreeing the framework for the National Cultural Programme for 2014 where we have put aside £8 Million of Lottery funds. We have also helped broker a programme for 2014 which will see all four Lottery distributors investing in community celebrations.

We will host the International Delegates Centre for the Edinburgh Festivals at Waverley Gate in our new space and we are active partners in Scotland in London over the summer.

We continue to strengthen our relationships with SDI, Visit Scotland and the British Council and many other international partners.

Youth Strategy

Our Board approved the draft of the Youth Strategy which is now with your office for consideration. This has been a model of consultation with the sector with over 1750 people contributing their thoughts to the development of the strategy.

We have also approved a new budget and an action plan for our contribution to supporting youth employment in the arts and are developing further partnerships with Young Scot and SCVO to deliver apprenticeships and graduate internships.

Creative Industries

We welcomed the recent opportunity to update you on actions now being taken in the creative industries. Our joint research on economic contribution of the creative industries provide an important benchmark. Partnerships such as the TV production fund pilot with Scottish Enterprise and our work with NESTA will provide new routes for investing in the sector.

Wider relationships

As you state, Creative Scotland has made huge progress in its first two years in its role as champion and it is our belief that we have forged many strong relationships during that period. However, it has been clearly demonstrated in the recent past that some relationships remain to be built, and some will need to be repaired. We lack nothing in determination to do this.

Our revised 3 year plan will put a greater emphasis on our commitment to artists and creative practitioners whilst ultimately seeking delivery for the people and geography of Scotland. We recognise that we need to do more to engage cultural stakeholders beyond our core funded agencies. Our roadshows have done just that in many parts of Scotland, and have been well received, but there are clearly gaps in terms of reach and alignment. We will continue to try to engage with our stakeholders and deal with their valid concerns.

Our partnerships with Local Government are developing well, both through the Place Partnerships and through engagement with the likes of London 2012 Summer of Song, Year of Creative Scotland and other programmes. Our CEO is well through his current series of meetings with every Local Authority in Scotland. We welcome the role that you have played in developing champions for culture in local authorities and recognise that recent administration changes will require us all to renew our efforts in this area.

On working with the sector our Board will consider setting up a new Policy Forum which will enable us to involve the sector as an informed sounding board on key policy developments.

We have been consulting widely on the Youth Arts Strategy, theatre review and other sectoral reviews. As these are published in the Autumn we will involve the sector in a

constructive dialogue to inform our decisions on any strategic commissioning of new work next year.

We already have a process in place for theatre endorsed by the Federation of Scottish Theatres and have had similar discussions with SCAN and Craft Scotland.

We note your request for Creative Scotland to help the sector find ways of understanding, appreciating and celebrating the cultural achievement of our artists and other creative practitioners at both national and local level. We already have some plans in place and will consider other ways that we can assist. Our planned newsletter will be an important tool in celebrating the success of the sector both in Scotland and beyond.

Statutory requirements

We are aware of the statutory duties on public bodies under the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 and we have been very active in seeking to fulfil our duties in the area of Equalities, where Creative Scotland already has an active programme of work both internally and externally.

We look forward to working with your team on the joint planning suggested in the draft Public Bodies Joint Improvement Plan. Our Senior Management Team has already discussed the matter of continuous improvement in the areas referred to in the Statement of Corporate Expectations 2012-13.

Finally, we were pleased that Creative Scotland's merger was recently highlighted as a positive case study by Audit Scotland.

In closing let me thank you once again for the strength of support you have given us in the early years of Creative Scotland.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sandy Crombie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Sir Sandy Crombie
Chair