

Minutes of the meeting of the Toscaireacht, Tuesday 1 July 2014 at the Arts Council, 70 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

**Present:** Anthony Cronin, Rhona Clarke, Vivienne Roche, Mary FitzGerald, Éilís Ní Dhuibhne, Jane O’Leary, Seoirse Bodley

**Apologies:** Shelley McNamara and Brian Maguire

**In attendance:** Liz Powell, Registrar

Members noted with sadness the death of Dermot Healy. JO’L recognised his enormous contribution on behalf of the Toscaireacht. Anthony Cronin, speaking of Dermot, said “he had served on the Toscaireacht for many years, making the onerous journey from Sligo. He took on the task of making the report of the Toscaireacht for the General Assembly. He was an admirable member of Aosdána, both in his reticence and his reasoning. He will be missed.”

### **Minutes and notes of the previous meetings**

Minutes of 28 March were taken as accurate and were proposed by JOL and seconded by ÉníD.

### **Notes of joint meeting of Arts Council and Toscaireacht 13 May**

It was noted that Anthony Cronin had proposed to the Toscaireacht that the General Assembly be made open and that private business be abolished. This had then been communicated to the Arts Council.

JO’L proposed and RC seconded a formal ratification of the proposal.

### **Voting systems**

Following the General Assembly, a number of members contacted the Toscaireacht to suggest other new member voting mechanisms.

MF reported that in response to the motion at the General Assembly to introduce a Proportional Representation voting system for the election of new members, BL had contacted an expert in the area who investigated the systems and commented that the current voting system was already quite complicated and that introducing PR would further complicate matters. It was suggested that a ‘first past the post’ system would be the most appropriate as Aosdána is not looking for a proportional result.

It was agreed that a ‘first past the post’ option should be implemented for the 2015 General Assembly. BL proposed this change; ÉníD seconded it.

A decision on how to allow members to vote on this proposed change to be taken at a future meeting.

### **Media issues**

MF confirmed she would co-ordinate responses to all media queries, but requested that a member of each discipline be available to consult with her on artform-specific issues that may arise in the future: VR agreed to assist in Visual Arts; ÉníD re Irish language issues; BL re Literature and both JOL and RC agreed to assist with music. Anthony Cronin further

suggested that all members of Aosdána should take the time to respond to any mis-statements in the press.

**Aosdána web development**

The Registrar outlined that an upgrade of the Aosdána website was required as the Content Management System is in danger of becoming obsolete. This should enable a more responsive site to be developed.

**Communications with membership**

MF agreed to progress this issue with the Registrar

**AOB**

MF was authorised to issue a statement on the proposed jailing for a second time of Margareta D'Arcy, should the issue arise.