

Minutes of the meeting of the Toscaireacht

Date 18 March 2010

Time 1pm

Venue No 70 Merrion Sq

Present

Seóirse Bodley, Nick Miller, Mannix Flynn, Hugh Maxton, Jane O'Leary,

In attendance

Toby Dennett (Registrar) and Katie Lowry (International Arts and Artists' Supports Officer)

Papers before the meeting

Agenda

1. Election of Chair
2. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising
3. Discipline ballot results
4. General Assembly
 - Schedule for event
 - Agenda items
 - 2009 Minutes
 - Toscaireacht report
 - Proposed motions
5. Status of Department and Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism
6. AOB

1. Election of Chair

Jane O'Leary was elected to chair the meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were noted from Anthony Cronin, Theo Dorgan, Dermot Healy, Brian Maguire and Macdara Woods.

3. Previous Minutes and Matters Arising

Previous minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

Matters arising:

It was agreed that Jane O'Leary should draft a response to a letter received from RTÉ regarding the future of the Vanbrugh Quartet. The response would inform RTE that the matter was being brought to the Aosdána General Assembly in Armagh for discussion.

4. Discipline ballot results

The Registrar informed the meeting that 8 candidates had been successful in the discipline ballot.

A member noted that no Visual Arts candidates had been successful and felt that concern should be expressed about this in the Toscaireacht report.

Another member felt that Aosdána should look at the possibility of reviewing the current division of disciplines. It was agreed that the Toscaireacht would examine the current categories of discipline at a later date.

5. General Assembly

➤ Schedule for event

The Registrar provided a verbal update on the schedule of the day which was noted by the Toscaireacht.

The Registrar confirmed that as hosts of the dinner the North South Ministerial Council and Armagh City and District Council, would be responsible for issuing invitations to any third parties that might attend the event.

In response to a query put by the Registrar as to where press enquiries might be directed the Toscaireacht appointed Mannix Flynn as press liaison.

➤ Agenda items

The Toscaireacht agreed the agenda for the General Assembly and the items to be taken in public session and private session.

It was agreed that the invitation from Temple Bar Cultural Trust should be placed on the agenda for discussion and that members should receive a copy of the letter in advance.

It was proposed that Seóirse Bodley should be nominated to Chair the General Assembly. Seóirse confirmed he would accept the nomination.

➤ 2009 Minutes

It was agreed to amend any references to 'this year' to be read '2009'. It was otherwise agreed that the minutes should be recommended to the General Assembly as a true and accurate record.

➤ Toscaireacht report

After a lengthy discussion the Toscaireacht agreed on the items to be included in the Toscaireacht report.

It was agreed that Dermot Healy should be asked to draft the Toscaireacht report..

➤ Proposed motions

The Registrar drew the members' attention to the motions that had been received.

After discussion and some amendment it was agreed to put forward the following motion proposed by Mannix Flynn and seconded by Ulick O'Connor:

That this assembly deplores the act of censorship imposed by the Director and management of the Dunamais Arts Centre Portlaoise, on Farcry Productions

installation of the Visual Art Show, Padded Cell and other stories. Further that this assembly finds that the support by the Arts Council for such censorship totally inappropriate and unacceptable.

A motion proposed by Margaretta D'Arcy and seconded by Paula Meehan concerning issues of censorship potentially arising from the Residential Redress Act was discussed. It was decided that if the motion were to go forward it would be important for the preamble to the motion to be included so as to give some context to the issue. After discussion it was decided that the proposers and seconders should be asked to amend the motion so that it read as an expression of concern rather than as a direct request to the relevant minister who it was felt would not be in a position to provide the reassurance requested.

The registrar reported that Anthony Cronin had confirmed that he would be putting forward a motion relating to the Artists Exemption in line with discussions held at previous meetings. It was agreed that this motion should be put forward.

It was noted that the position of Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism remained vacant. It was agreed that depending on the situation at the time of the Assembly a motion may be put forward in relation to this.

6. Status of Department and Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism

The Toscaireacht discussed the implications of the vacant position of Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the outgoing Minister to thank him for his work. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Taoiseach advocating for the retention of the department and for the speedy appointment of a new minister.

7. AOB

There was no other business.

ENDS