

Toscaireacht Meeting

Minutes

Date: 8 November 2004

Time: 13.30

Venue: The Arts Council, 70 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

Present:

Seirse Bodley

Clare Boylan

Cecily Brennan

Anthony Cronin

Theo Dorgan

Paul Durcan

Jennifer Johnston

Michael Kane

Alice Maher

In attendance: Mary Cloake (Director of the Arts Council), Paul Johnson (Deputy Registrar), Siân Cunningham (Artists' Services Officer, minutes).

Papers before the meeting

Minutes of meeting 10 May 2004

Equality Officer Decision re Clifford V Aosdána

Correspondence from Raymond Deane

Information on nominations in the music discipline

1. Apologies

Roger Doyle

2. Election of Chairperson

Anthony Cronin was nominated to chair for this meeting

3. Change in agenda order

On request from the Director of the Arts Council and Deputy Registrar it was agreed to move the item 'Post of Registrar' to the latter part of the meeting.

4. Minutes

The minutes of 10 May 2004 were adopted as an accurate record of the meeting.

5. Matters Arising

Under item 3.2 Anthony Cronin enquired about the information regarding the election of composers to membership which was presented to the previous meeting.

The Deputy Registrar distributed the papers. He explained that the last meeting (21 June 2004) was inquorate and therefore members did not discuss the paper.

The Deputy Registrar clarified any queries that arose from the papers presented.

The chair suggested that this item be deferred to the next meeting for discussion as Roger Doyle was not at this meeting and the chair did not think it appropriate to make decisions on this matter in his absence.

It was agreed that further information would be provided in addition to the information on the paper before the meeting. The Deputy Registrar agreed to providing information

dating back to two years prior to the last 2 day meeting, which was held in 1999. He agreed to circulate the research in advance of the meeting.

6. Schedule for nominations for membership

A discussion around nominations for membership took place, taking into account that increased number of places available.

The Deputy Registrar clarified that it has already been agreed with the Arts Council that 50 new members can be brought on stream over the next 5 year period. The issue of including architects and choreographers must be addressed in this time period. The mechanism for introducing them to membership has yet to be agreed.

A lengthy discussion ensued on the matter.

It was decided that a proposal will be compiled by the Deputy Registrar and this will be presented to the Arts Council at its plenary meeting on 22 November. The letter requesting nominations for membership will not be sent out until after this meeting has taken place.

The Toscairí agreed that 12 places will be available in 2005 (10 new and 2 through attrition). They also agreed that for this first year of the introduction of architects and choreographers, the procedure will be that the entire membership will vote on architecture and choreography nominations. This procedure will be referred to in the letter that will be sent post the plenary meeting on 22 November.

7. Date for General Assembly 2005

The Deputy Registrar reported that Dublin Castle is not available during February or March 2005.

He also explained that the Arts Council executive will be tied up with the consultative process for the new strategy for the arts until mid April.

The Toscairí requested that the Deputy Registrar looks into an alternative venue for the General Assembly which they would like to take place at the end of March 2005.

It was suggested to look at the RHA as a possibility.

8. Post of Registrar

The Director of the Arts Council spoke about the post of Registrar of Aosdána. The status of the artist in society is a very important matter for the Council and the centre focus of the new Council is on the artist. She feels that she may not be able to offer the position of Registrar, the attention and seriousness that it deserves.

She explained there is a split in the function of Registrar and Deputy Registrar and that de facto most of the work is delegated to the Deputy Registrar.

She proposed the idea that the office of Registrar be filled by Paul Johnson, Artists' Services Manager and that the Director be named in the Standing Orders separate from the Registrar. She also suggested that in order to retain the link between the Arts Council and Aosdána that a yearly meeting should be held between the Council and the Toscaireacht.

The Chair agreed to this proposal and added that he thought the role of Registrar be designated to the job title of Artists' Services Manager in Aosdána literature. He also added that the Registrar should consult with the Director of the Arts Council on all matters of common concern to the Arts Council and Aosdána.

With regard to the naming of functions of the Registrar, it was agreed that this will be formalised at a later stage.

Theo Dorgan expressed concern about this proposal. He said that one of the ways in which the Arts Council honours Aosdána is by having the Director as Registrar of Aosdána. He suggested that rather than hand over the office of Registrar to the Artists'

Services Manager, that the Director should retain an honorific title of Registrar and that it should be stated that the Registrar has the right to delegate to the Deputy Registrar.

The Chair disagreed with this idea and reiterated the concerns of the Director in relation to the issue. The work of the Arts Council and its relationship with artists is expanding and the Director's desire to hand over office to another executive member who has the time to dedicate to this role should be respected.

It was agreed that the Deputy Registrar of Aosdána (Paul Johnson) is now the new Registrar.

9. Update of Equality Authority Ruling in the matter of Clifford V Aosdána

An update was given to the meeting in relation to this case. The Arts Council will appeal the decision of the Equality Authority ruling and this hearing will take place on 15 February 2005.

10. A.O.B.

10.1 Correspondence from Raymond Deane

Approximately 2,000 artists have been contacted by the Revenue Commissioners with regard to payment of PRSI. Many have been informed that they will owe arrears back to 1990.

The Director of the Arts Council informed the meeting that the Arts Council will be making a formal representation to the Revenue Commissioners and the Department of Social Welfare. An information sheet will be available in approximately 10 days with advice for artists on how to respond to these letters.

Clare Boylan suggested that the Arts Council could put this information sheet on its website.

10.2 Date for next meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place in the offices of the Arts Council on Thursday 25th November 2004 commencing at 13.30 with sandwiches.

Paul Durcan left the meeting at 15.45.

Jennifer Johnston left the meeting at 16.00.

Michael Kane left the meeting at 16.05.

10.3

The Toscairí congratulated Paul Johnson on his new post of Registrar.

10.4

Cecily Brennan thanked Paul Johnson for the work that was invested into the election process for the election of the current Toscaireacht. She noted that the entire process ran very smoothly.

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 16.10.

ENDS