

MINUTES

Meeting of Toscaireacht, via Zoom.

1030am – 1230pm 27 July 2020

Present

Anne Haverty (Chair), Enda Wyley, Geraldine O'Reilly, Michael Holohan, Gerard Smyth, Grainne Mulvey, Mary O'Donnell, Theo Dorgan

Apologies

Eamon Colman, Deirdre Kinahan

Zoom Host

Karen Hennessy (Registrar)

Welcome (prior to the start of the meeting)

Maureen Kennelly, Director, Arts Council

Maureen Kennelly welcomed the Toscaireacht and outlined how pleased she is to work with the new Toscaireacht in place since Jan 2020.

Meeting Commences

Minutes and Matters arising

Geraldine O'Reilly proposed the minutes and Mary O'Donnell seconded. No matters arising.

General Assembly 2020

Karen presented the result of the email to members enquiring about intentions to attend the General Assembly. Altogether there were 129 responses; of these 85 said 'Yes'; 32 said 'No' and 12 said 'Maybe'. Subsequently some members who had said 'Yes' had changed their mind to 'Maybe'. Members also had contacted the Registrar individually to express their concern that the election of new members takes place regardless of having a full General Assembly and that this was their main priority.

After some discussion it was decided that as the overall feeling was that it is likely more members will change their mind come October and that in the interest of planning and certainly that the best decision was to not have the General Assembly on 5 Oct in UCD and instead to concentrate on the election of new members and organise a postal vote to all. The situation regarding COVID-19 has many uncertainties and this was thought to be the best course of action in the interest of all concerned and health and safety.

The merits or otherwise of having 3 minute zoom presentations by nominators to accompany a postal vote were discussed. It was decided that due to confidentiality as well as varying levels of internet coverage around the country that it was better to not include zoom presentations either live or in a pre-recorded manner. A suggestion had been made to the Toscaireacht by a member that in the case of a postal vote and in place of the usual 3 minute presentation that the nominators include a one page written presentation on their candidate. It was decided that a postal vote should

be arranged for all 239 members. The postal pack should include a letter from the Toscaireacht; a one page written presentation from each nominator on their candidate; a ballot paper listing all candidates up for election and a stamped addressed envelope. The nomination papers for each candidate would be emailed to all members apart from those 32 members who require postal only communication.

The following decisions were made. For this pack to be sent to all members for receipt on or before 5 October 2020 with a return date to the Arts Council offices of the stamped addressed envelope with the ballot paper no later than Monday 12 October 2020, post-marked by Friday 9th October 2020. An email reminder to be issued to all members during the week. The Arts Council to arrange the ballot count on Monday 12 October with 3 members of Arts Council staff; 3 volunteers from the Toscaireacht and the Registrar. The ballot count to be recorded. The outcome of the ballot count to be communicated to nominees; nominators; Aosdana members and the press on that same day.

It was proposed that the General Assembly should then take place in its usual format in May 2021

Aosdána/Arts Council Working Group

Proposal to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Aosdana with a publication

There was agreement to the proposal to celebrate the 40th anniversary of Aosdana with a publication and for Karen to progress this further. In the absence of a meeting of the Working Group and given the timeframe it was decided this should be progressed via email. It was thought that the proposed date of launching the publication of May 2021 was too short and that this should be extended until October 2021. It was thought that all members past and present could be listed in the publication but in the case of members and their work being featured that it would be appropriate to feature the Saoithe and their work rather than making any selections. Karen to progress this with the Aosdána/Arts Council Working Group members via email.

Timeline on the foundation of Aosdána

Theo prepared a timeline on the Foundation of Aosdána. On foot of research in the National Archives and documents in Michael Holohan's possession Theo proposed this timeline on the Foundation of Aosdána, seconded by Michael Holohan. Anne Haverty suggested the timeline be dated, 27 July 2020, and include the word 'documented' as further documents could arise. The Toscaireacht agreed to the adoption of the proposed documented timeline as at 27 July 2020.

Position on the Cnuas

Theo proposed a position on the Cnuas seconded by Michael Holohan. The position includes that the Cnuas is not referred to as a bursary but as the Cnuas payment, as being the term specifically recognised by the Revenue Commissioners, and that the artist shows that work of merit was produced to receive subsequent Cnuas. This position was seconded by Michael Holohan and agreed to by the Toscaireacht.

Date of next Toscaireacht Meeting

It was suggested the Toscaireacht could meet if required before the next Aosdána/Arts Council working group meeting which is due to be early or mid – September 2020. This meeting could be by zoom. It was suggested that the meeting after this would be face to face. Karen to look into options on a meeting room that would facilitate a 2 metre social distance scenario for the 10 members.

Action Items

- Karen to email members to inform them of arrangements for the General Assembly
- The Toscaireacht to compose a letter to members for the postal pack
- Karen to liaise with nominators and prepare the postal vote packs.
- Karen to liaise with Aosdána/Arts Council working group on date for next meeting.
- Karen to progress the publication for the 40th anniversary via email with the Aosdána/Arts Council Working Group members.