SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS
CREATIVE INDUSTRIES ADVISORY GROUP MEETING
WEDNESDAY 8 FEBRUARY 2017, 10:00-12:00

Present:

Scottish Ministers:
Fiona Hyslop - Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs (Chair)
Paul Wheelhouse - Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy

Creative Industries:
Bob Last - Film Producer (Co-chair)
Brian Coane - The Leith Agency / Institute of Advertising Practitioners Scotland
Willie Watt - Nicholl Russell Studios / Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland
Toby Webster - The Modern Institute
Carol Sinclair - Carol Sinclair Ceramics
Lorna Macaulay - The Harris Tweed Authority
Chris Hunt - Scotland Re:designed
Janice Kirkpatrick - Graven
Lucy Mason - National Theatre of Scotland
Dougal Perman - Scottish Music Industry Association
David Eustace - Chancellor of Edinburgh Napier University
Colin Anderson - Denki
Cameron Fraser - Ko Lik Animated Films
Pamela Tulloch - Scottish Library and Information Council
Sarah Cameron - SENSCOT
Polly Purvis - ScotlandIS
Alex Smith - XpoNorth
Simon Cotton - Johnstons of Elgin
Andrew Dobbie - MadeBrave
Joanne Orr - Museums and Galleries
Rachael Brown - Cultural Enterprise Office
Philip Hannay - Cloch Solicitors
Jack Powell - Creative Industries Federation

Scottish Government:
Jonathan Pryce - Director for Culture, Tourism and Major Events
Diane McLafferty - Deputy Director, Culture and Historic Environment
Laura Holton - Head of Policy, Culture and Historic Environment Division
Stephanie Cymber - Senior Policy Officer, Creative Industries
James Muldoon - Head of Entrepreneurship

Observers:
Clive Gillman - Director of Creative Industries, Creative Scotland
David Hartley - Creative Industries and Digital Markets Manager, Scottish Enterprise
David Martin - Creative Industries Skills Manager, Skills Development Scotland
Iain Hamilton - Creative Industries Manager, Highlands and Islands Enterprise

Apologies:

Ciara Phillips - Artist
Jane Muirhead - Raise the Roof Productions
Jenny Todd - Canongate Books
Claire Forsyth - Glasgow Print Studio
Mary McAllan - Scottish Government Director for Economic Development

Tom Craig - Scottish Government Policy Officer, Entrepreneurship Team

1.   Welcome and Introductions

1.1   The meeting was opened by the Cabinet Secretary who explained that the Scottish Government is committed to developing Scotland's thriving creative industries and enabling them to grow.   The Creative Industries Advisory Group (CIAG) had therefore been established to create a space of open and honest dialogue about the issues facing the sector, and facilitate collaborative working between the public sector and industry to ensure the creative industries were being given the support they needed.

1.2   The Cabinet Secretary explained that she was keen to create the conditions for success by ensuring that public sector policies towards creative industries were aligned with business needs on the ground; while also considering how Government could support sector-led activity to promote and develop the industry.

1.3   The Cabinet Secretary introduced her colleague, Paul Wheelhouse (Minister for Business, Innovation and Energy), who spoke about the importance of the creative industries to the Scottish economy and the potential value in maximising the links with the entrepreneurship agenda.

1.4   Bob Last, Co-Chair, then made introductory remarks which highlighted that the CIAG agenda and discussions should be driven by the members. He noted that expectations were high for the Group, and having the opportunity to discuss issues of relevance to the sector was of real value. He suggested that the focus should remain on the achievable, and due account given to any necessary processes that would be needed to move issues forward.

2.   Remit and Terms of Reference

2.1   The draft Remit and Terms of Reference were agreed on the following basis:

- there would be free and frank discussion under Chatham House rules. As such, written notes of meetings would not be attributed, and in discussing the meeting externally members should not attribute comments to individual members;

- a summary of discussions would be compiled and published on the Scottish Government website;

- short life task groups may be considered to deliver specific actions.

2.2   In terms of membership, it was agreed that attendance should be kept tight and focused but that others from across the creative industries could be invited to meetings to contribute specialist knowledge on an ad hoc basis depending on the themes of discussion.

2.3   It had been suggested to the Scottish Government that the minority language sectors (Gaelic and Scots) be represented on the group. The Cabinet Secretary wanted to keep the group as is for present but will ensure the interests of the minority language sectors - alongside the need to focus on emerging artists, makers and practitioners - are considered by the group as a whole.

ACTION: Secretariat to update Terms of Reference to reflect discussion.

3.   Context and Meeting Theme

3.1   Creative entrepreneurship was the theme for meeting in terms of developing the links between creative industries, enterprise and entrepreneurship; exploring how to raise the profile of creative industries within the entrepreneurship agenda and how to do so in a way that would be of value to the sector.

3.2   In that context, there was a short discussion between Members and Mr Wheelhouse on what a more entrepreneurial society in Scotland might look like. It was acknowledged that many children of primary school age will grow up to work in jobs which don't currently exist and the aspiration that the power of the creative industries could be better harnessed to develop resilience and adaptability in society to cope with this change, as well as put us in the forefront of technological and design markets. Support for the textiles industry to tackle the challenge of strong competition from other parts of the UK was also discussed.

4.   'What is a Creative Entrepreneur?'

4.1   Members heard a presentation from Rachael Brown, the Chief Executive of the Cultural Enterprise Office who spoke about what creative entrepreneurship means in her experience and why people define themselves as such (the social, economic, cultural reasons which sets creatives apart from other entrepreneurs). Rachael also highlighted global trends with some international examples and spoke about the Scottish context.

5.   'Creative Entrepreneurship'

5.1   Members heard a presentation from Andrew Dobbie who spoke about his experience of becoming a creative entrepreneur and setting up his own digital creative agency, MadeBrave. Andrew spoke about his experience of accessing support and the steps he took to scale his business, turning it into a successful brand.

6.   Roundtable Discussion

6.1   In discussion, the following points were made:

- The existing layers of support, or support structures, were excessive and too complex. Support was not necessarily always available at the right point in the journey of developing an idea or business so consideration should be given to when the most effective point of intervention would be for businesses. In particular, sustainable support for social enterprises was imperative. The sector is not necessarily seeking more support or more money from the public sector. In fact, current support provision from public sector and academia can sometimes be complicating rather than enabling. Rather, public sector should focus on enabling the sector to use its professional skills (such as marketing and design) and supporting creative individuality to solve problems and capitalise on existing recourses. Sectoral leaders would rise to the top - the Government's role was to bring together art, commerce and education so the industry could make its own opportunities.

- The establishment of geographic hubs - clustering creative businesses not just by sector but by location in order to support more successful micro-businesses was a good way of enabling the sector, particularly in remote areas. It supported both innovation and the sharing of business intelligence. It was suggested that the Group could consider the potential of these further.

- Passion, hope and love were critical drivers for most creative businesses. This authenticity and energy was sometimes hard to capture in marketing and branding terms.

- Internationalisation and connecting Scottish businesses to the global competitive market place was critical. Attracting and retaining the best skills and talent could be a challenge, because while Scotland had a strong reputation culturally, its creative commercial reputation globally was not always as strong. This needed to be taken into account when positioning Scotland's creative industries as a global brand. It was suggested that enhancing the international reach and reputation of the Scottish creative industries could be a future focus for discussions.

- There was a widespread sense that academic engagement with the creative industries wasn't as aligned as it could be with the interests of the sector. The research and innovation of academia was valued, but it was suggested that academic institutions should more fully recognise the distinct roles and expertise of the creative industries within the commercial sphere, so activity did not overlap and duplicate effort. Universities had a key role to play in supporting the emerging talent pipeline and teaching broader business skills. In academia, there should also be a greater recognition and encouragement of the value of individual creativity, resilience and risk taking. Equally, creative businesses could be more involved in research and development.

- Social entrepreneurs in the creative industries often had a starting point of wanting to use their talents and skills to help people. There were many gaps in support around creative social entrepreneurs, especially as the type of support required could be quite different i.e. recognising the pipeline of talent often did not come through higher education institutions. The landscape was complicated as there were many creative businesses delivering social impact without necessarily identifying as creative social entrepreneurs.

6.2   In summarising the discussions, the Cabinet Secretary highlighted key themes to consider further were:

- Bringing clarity and purpose to the strategic relationship between universities and creative industries;

- Exploring the benefits and opportunities around physical creative spaces, which might feed into town centre reviews;

- Ensuring creative industries were central in the development of city deals;

- Promoting the idea of resilience and creativity throughout the education system;

- Exploring the concept of Scotland's creative brand, and how it positions our creative industries globally;

- Is there enough cross-sector support for each other's industries? Could more synergies be found?

- How do creative industries support the agenda to tackle societal inequalities, through inclusive economic growth?

- Is the timing and nature of support interventions targeted most effectively?

7.   AOB and Date of Next Meeting

7.1   There were no other items of business.

7.2   The Cabinet Secretary asked Members to reflect on the discussions and consider what the group can achieve strategically and in what practical ways it could deliver drivers for change, both in the short and longer term. The group would also be asked in due course to consider what agenda items should be prioritised for the next meeting of the group.

7.3   The group will meet twice a year with the next meeting taking place in early-mid September 2017. Scottish Government officials will identify a suitable date and advise Members.

[Post meeting note: the next Creative Industries Advisory Group will take place on Wednesday 13th September].

END.