

Date : 26 March 2003
Time : 9:00 – 12:30
Venue: Committee Room 1

**ACW REPORT TO CULTURE COMMITTEE
Wednesday 26th March 2003
National Assembly for Wales**

Introduction

This report is intended to update Culture Committee on some key developments since the Arts Council of Wales last met with the Committee on 20th November 2002.

Launch of Supporting Creativity

Supporting Creativity, the Five Year Arts Development Strategy of The Arts Council of Wales was officially launched at two separate venues, Craft in the Bay, Cardiff on Tuesday 11th March and Ruthin Craft Centre on Friday 14th March. Jenny Randerson AM, Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language spoke at the Cardiff event, and Rhodri Glyn Thomas AM, Chair of the Culture Committee spoke at the launch in Ruthin.

The document was previously available on the website, and copies will be provided for members at the meeting.

Supporting Creativity has at its core “the vision of a dynamic and creative arts sector for Wales: the preferred place to practise and experience the arts”. The document outlines eight strategic priorities for the period 2002 – 2007, namely the strengthening of the arts infrastructure, creating opportunities for individual artists, improving equal opportunities, supporting participation in and access to the arts, developing artistic work in and through the Welsh language and encouraging greater education and training.

In addition, the strategy places emphasis on the importance of partnership in achieving its aims and objectives. ACW’s partnerships with the Welsh Assembly Government, local authorities, individual artists, arts organisations and the voluntary cultural sector in Wales along with UK and international partnerships are seen as integral to the way forward for the arts in Wales.

The strategy has come about through an open and transparent consultation exercise that has been conducted over the last eighteen months with individuals and organisations from both the arts sector and related areas. This exercise is by no means over as ACW is committed to holding an annual arts conference each year at which the progress of achieving the aims and objectives outlined in *Supporting Creativity* will be under constant review.

Remit Letter & Budget

The Arts Council has now received its remit letter and set its budget accordingly.

The funding for the Arts Council for 2003-04 – 2005-06 is detailed in the tables below.

Culture Fund – Arts Council of Wales Allocation

£000s	Plans 2003-04	Indicative Plans 2004-05	Indicative Plans 2005-06
Current Expenditure	21,229	21,984	22,583
Current Receipts	-160	-160	-160
Capital Expenditure	55	55	55
Total	21,124	21,879	22,478

In the coming year, ACW will be implementing the next phase of spending on the Welsh Language National Theatre, will be introducing the major expansion of theatre in education provision and funding of National Youth Arts funded through Supporting Young Creativity, operating a new grant scheme to support access and involvement in the arts by disabled people and taking on a number of new revenue clients including Arts Training Wales, TRAC, the national agency for traditional culture and new visual arts clients who are separately detailed below.

The continued decline in Lottery funding is a cause for concern. Funding for projects and for capital has reduced in the current year by £1.5 million.

The stabilisation schemes is due to go ahead in the coming year.

Board of Welsh Language Theatre

The Board of Theatr Genedlaethol Cymru has now met for the first time, and is now planning to making staff appointments and finalising its business plan. It has decided that the company should be based within a Welsh speaking area, and has invited relevant local authorities to put forward partnership proposals for its base.

Lyn T Jones is the Chairman and the Board Members are:

- **Gareth Miles** from Pontypridd, playwright;
- **Carys Tudor Williams** from Wrexham, specialist in drama education and Chair of the Drama Committee of the National Eisteddfod;
- **Peter Davies** from Cardiff, Head of Drama at Rhydfeelin;
- **Linda Brown** from Bethesda, administrator of Cwmni Theatr Bara Caws;
- **Garry Nicholas** from Llanelli, deputy head of Ysgol Gyfun y Strade;
- **Gwyneth Glyn Evans** from Pwllheli, playwright;
- **Wynford Ellis Owen** from Cardiff, actor and writer;
- **Iwan England** from the South Wales Valleys and works in the Media;

- **John Gwynedd Jones** from Caernarfon, Chief Executive of Barcud Derwen;
- **Elinor R Williams** from Pontarddulais, Marketing & Community Relations Manager at the BBC;
- and **Siôn Clwyd Roberts** from Cardiff, Business Manager at HTV.

Launch of Arts Work

ACW has launched a new publication, *The Arts Work: Facts and figures on the arts in Wales* which highlights the significant role the arts play in both the social and economic life of Wales. Copies will be distributed at the meeting. This reflects the strong view arising from consultation that ACW should play a lead role in promoting the arts and their benefits. The document includes data from the survey of revenue organisations which was previously presented to the Culture Committee as well as the latest results from the Beaufort Omnibus Study.

In addition to advocating the intrinsic worth of the arts, the document draws on a wide range of statistical data to argue the case for the wider benefits offered by the arts – creating jobs, earning money for the national economy, providing training and education opportunities and developing local communities.

The digest reveals that 65% of adults in Wales agree that “the arts play a valuable role in the life of the Country” (Welsh Omnibus Survey 2002. Beaufort Research). This statement is backed up by the 3.1 million attendances at arts events (exhibitions, film screenings, performances) in Wales between April 2001 – March 2002 (ACW survey of revenue funded arts organisations 2001/02).

The popularity of the arts is not limited to adults alone. 73% of young people between the ages of 11 – 16 take part in art activity once a year or more often. This participation stimulates learning and improves key skills. 62% of school pupils say they take part in arts activities “to learn new skills” and 55% agreed that “taking part makes me feel more confident in myself”. (Source: Young people’s arts participation survey 2002. Beaufort Research)

Funding for Visual Arts Clients

In the coming year, ACW will be taking on new revenue clients within the visual arts, and enhancing the funding to others. The newly funded galleries are

- The Queens Hall, Narberth
- Y Tabernacl Machynlleth
- Mission Gallery
- Contemporary Temporary Artspace

The galleries receiving additional funding are

- Oriol Davies Gallery
- Ruthin Craft Centre

Display of art – Visual Arts Action Plan

The Council is preparing a draft visual arts and crafts action plan which will form the basis of a major consultation. This will cover issues regarding the display of visual arts and crafts, as well as support for individual artists and makers.

Key elements of the draft will be shared with the Committee in the presentation.

Capital Consultation

An extensive consultation on ACW's Lottery capital programme is coming to an end. ACW has proposed concentrating the reduced resources primarily on improving the existing infrastructure, and enabling independent venues to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act. The recent re-opening of Oriel Davies in Newtown following a major refurbishment is indicative of the future direction proposed.

Peter Tyndall
March 2003