

Minutes

Cross Party Group on Culture

Held on Zoom

Wednesday 17th March 2021

7pm – 8.30pm

MSPs Present: 2. Joan McAlpine MSP and Claire Baker MSP

Non-MSP Present: 61.

7:05pm **Welcome & Theme**

Joan McAlpine MSP welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the theme of Recovery from Covid-19. Joan reminded group members that this is the last meeting of the CPG in its current form pre-election 2021.

7:10pm **Items for Any Other Business (see attached)**

There were no further items for any other business.

7:15pm **Minutes of the last meeting (to be approved and seconded) (attached)**

The minutes were approved by Julia Amour and seconded by Rab Noakes.

7:20pm **Guest Speaker Introductions**

Joan introduced the guest speakers.

- **Kirsty Cumming: Community Leisure UK**

Former language translator Kirsty Cumming was appointed as Chief Executive Officer of Community Leisure UK in November 2020. Prior to this Kirsty has held roles as Engagement Manager and Scotland Policy Manager for Community Leisure UK. Kirsty is a graduate of Herriot Watt University.

- **Daniel Gillespie: Skerryvore**

Daniel is co-founder and Director at Skerryvore, Apex Music International Ltd, Tiree Music Festival CIC, Tyree Records and Decade Events Ltd (Oban Live). Daniel is an MBA graduate of Strathclyde University. Daniel recently gave evidence to the UK Governments' music streaming inquiry.

- **Emma Halford-Forbes: Go-Industrial**

Emma is an experienced museum professional, with expertise in museum development, curatorship, management, and collections management and engagement. She has a PGDip

MGS and more than 10 years' experience in the Scottish Museums sector. Emma has an Associateship of the Museums Association.

7:45pm Guest Speakers on Recovery from Covid-19

- Kirsty Cummings Community, Leisure UK

Kirsty provided a presentation as to the impact on ALEOs in Scotland.
Short summary:

25% of Community Leisure UK members anticipate being insecure within the next 6 months. The level of deficit anticipated on average is £1.3m by the end of March 2021.

Members had 48 planned redundancies and a further 760 people not offered work.

Culture should be recognised as an essential service, contributing to health and wellbeing and should be at the core of Scotland's recovery from Covid-19.

- Daniel Gillespie, Tiree Music Festival / Skerryvore

Daniel provided an update from the point of view of rural Scotland.
Short summary:

Tiree Music Festival CIC took the decision to cancel the festival for 2021 in January 2021. Music lessons on the island were not able to continue; due to the island's connectivity still not being great lessons could not move online. Reductions in VAT from now until 2024 would be one way to support the music and festival sector to get back on its feet.

The majority of the funding available was not structured in a way that Tiree Music Festival could benefit from. We have commitments from May which are not covered by funding which only goes up to March 2020.

Funding should operate more on trust instead of asking for unachievable evidence that cannot be produced within the time-limits within a pandemic. There are musicians in Scotland; that Scotland should be very proud of, who right now are working in Amazon.

- Emma Halford-Forbes, Go Industrial

Emma provided an update from Industrial Museums in Scotland:

Emma agreed that many of the issues facing IMS were also facing the rest of the Scottish independent museum sector.

- *It's been a struggle for survival; to achieve and balance emergency funding, to be accountable for responsibilities to staff, to engage audiences and to change working practices.*
- *The emergency funding only covers the short-term and the job retention scheme has provided some breathing space; though its' not been enough and there are still redundancy consultations and emergency restructuring is taking place.*
- *The sector requires sustained support going forwards, small unique venues are particularly vulnerable; state aid limitations are currently unclear and unfair.*

8:05pm **Open discussion on theme**

The group held a general discussion and concluded that funding would be required into 2022 at least.

Freelancers although supported in Scotland compared to other parts of the UK were still in a very precarious position and some people had had events postponed many times; meaning they've still not been paid for events that were due to take place in 2020. The work has not been cancelled though they still have no income.

It would be useful if there was a fixed period for postponement; so that people know which window they will be paid in; as some gigs are postponed indefinitely.

As this is not in the spirit of the funding that was issued to the sector; the secretariat (Culture Counts) will bring this to the attention of Creative Scotland and National Companies.

More clarity is also needed so that we don't fall into the 'them and us' binary.

Film and TV have insurance which is backed by the UK Government, the wider sector also needs insurance; or significant investment to subsidise loss of income.

Trade Unions should be present at planning meetings; particularly where hybrid productions are being proposed.

8:15pm **Any Other Business Items**

The UK has still not signed the UN Convention on Tangible Heritage; all group members should write to their constituency MPs to ask for this to be signed.

Dance World Cup 2021. The dancers are unable to attend training due to Covid-19; could the group support the dancers to be able to train? Secretariat and Joan McAlpine MSP to follow this up.

8:20pm **Election; CPG re-establishment**

Group secretariat will manage the administration to re-establish the group after the election.

8:30pm

Close

Joan McAlpine MSP thanked the secretariat for administering the group. Group secretariat thanked Joan McAlpine MSP and Claire Baker MSP for their support for the CPG group and the sector.

Minutes approved Fri 22nd March 2021 by Moira Jeffrey (SCAN) and Jason Edwards (SMIA).