

Note of Meeting between Leslie Evans and Angela Saunders, Scottish Executive, with Steve Grimmond, John Zimny and Rod Stone, VOCAL, and Lindsay Macgregor, COSLA on Friday 17th March 2006 at COSLA Offices.

Apologies: Michael O'Neil, ADES; Stephen Fitzpatrick, COSLA; Ian Hooper, VOCAL; David Brew, Scottish Executive

1. Welcome and Background

Steve welcomed everyone to the meeting and re-iterated that VOCAL and COSLA remain very positive about the Minister's statement on the Cultural Review in which most of our recommendations were embraced. Key areas for discussion are:

- Governance;
- Avoiding a twin-track approach to local and national delivery;
- Resourcing; and
- Implementation.

2. Implementation Process and Timetable

Liesie and Angela outlined that:

- A Bill Team is being established, led by Grieg Chalmers, to develop instructions for solicitors on the proposed Cultural Bill. Drafting of the Bill by the end of 2006 will be carried out in tandem with the development of the entitlements framework and in line with the public sector reform agenda.
- Guidance on cultural planning and entitlements will also be developed over the next 8 months. Advice is sought by the Scottish Executive on how best to consult, to avoid large-scale but ineffective consultation processes. It is envisaged that a Working Group with membership from VOCAL, COSLA, SOLACE, the Scottish Arts Council, the Scottish Executive and other key stakeholders, will develop required Guidance (see separate paper provided by Scottish Executive).
 - VOCAL/COSLA proposed that ADES also be invited either to join the Working Group as a full member or to attend appropriate meetings, according to their preference.
 - VOCAL/COSLA agreed that there is a role for the Scottish Arts Council on the Cultural Planning Working Group as co-funders with local authorities of many cultural organisations and venues. However, COSLA/VOCAL also stressed the importance of a local government input to the development of Creative Scotland and the Nationals.
 - Leslie agreed that local government requires routes in to influence the development of both Creative Scotland and the Nationals and proposed that she would respond to COSLA/VOCAL with "milestones" on how this could proceed with regard to Creative Scotland.
 - On the Nationals, Leslie suggested that COSLA/VOCAL should request to attend the regular forum of the five nationals, chaired by Zoe van Zwannenberg, to open dialogue on how we should engage collectively. In addition, Leslie will consider how the Scottish Executive might act as a broker in engaging with the Nationals.

3. Pathfinders

We agreed that pathfinders:

- could provide an opportunity to emphasise the role of cross-cutting themes which cultural approaches can deliver;

- should not be about short-life “projects” but rather about sustainable relationships, approaches, partnerships and innovation;
- should be in keeping with the outcome focus of public sector reform;
- should support cultural planning to influence Community Planning processes (eg community engagement);
- could explore the opportunities and benefits of and barriers to two or more community planning partnerships working together across boundaries;
- could themselves be a tool for change and to embed cultural planning processes in local authority and community planning thinking;
- require some preliminary research and good practice mapping;
- require further thought as to exactly what they should be exploring (early suggestions include: inter-community planning partnership work (eg appointing joint co-ordinator); community engagement through cultural approaches; cultural opportunities for target groups, eg older people/young people/inter-generational).

In addition to a small number of “in-depth” pathfinders, we agreed that it would be instrumentally useful to incentivise all local authorities/community planning partnerships to develop cultural planning pilots.

Leslie and Angela confirmed that they could give no details about resources at this point.

4. Secondment

Leslie and Angela confirmed that the Scottish Executive is still committed to the principle of a secondment (see separate paper). However, funding has not been identified. Lindsay suggested some of the Pathfinder money might usefully and legitimately be applied to the secondment which will have long-term, sustainable benefits for the Scottish Executive and cultural planning. We agreed that the Scottish Executive, COSLA and VOCAL will, in the first instance, write out jointly to Chief Executives and Heads of Culture, inviting them to identify senior officers who might be seconded to the Scottish Executive for up to 8 months, either on a staff exchange basis or part- or fully-funded.

5. Next Steps

We agreed that:

- COSLA/VOCAL will further consider core membership of the Cultural Planning Working Group;
- COSLA/VOCAL will consider how best to map out the nature of cultural planning/entitlements best practice within authorities and community planning partnerships;
- COSLA/VOCAL will provide details of opportunities for dialogue with convenors, Leaders, senior officers etc;
- Scottish Executive will provide details on how COSLA/VOCAL can engage with the development of Creative Scotland/the Nationals;
- Scottish Executive will draft a letter to Chief Executives seeking a secondee and will further consider where funding might be sought to support such a secondment;
- We will continue regular dialogue, both formally and informally.

Dear Chief Exec/Head of Culture etc

Secondment Opportunity

Following the January announcement by Patricia Ferguson, Minister for Tourism, Culture and Sport, on the direction of the National Review of Culture, a working group is now being established to progress Cultural Planning and Entitlements.

In support of this phase of development, COSLA, VOCAL and the Scottish Executive jointly propose an exchange or secondment opportunity between senior officers in local government and the Executive for at least 3 days per week over 8 months. A person specification and job description are attached.

Options for the arrangement include:

- A direct exchange of staff between the Scottish Executive and a Scottish local authority; or
- A part-funded secondment to which both the Scottish Executive and the local authority would make a financial contribution.

Potential benefits to the secondee and their donor council include:

- Experience and understanding of the culture, approaches and workings of the Scottish Executive;
- Direct involvement in shaping and developing cultural planning and entitlements guidance;
- Opportunities to gain insights and practical involvement in local/central government collaboration; and
- Opportunities to gain insights into community planning and cultural planning across Scotland.

The Scottish Executive, VOCAL and COSLA welcome informal indications of interest in the proposed exchange/secondment from local authorities by (date) to Angela Saunders (contact details). If you would like to discuss any aspect of the arrangement, please contact Angela on (telephone number/e-mail).

Yours faithfully,

COSLA
VOCAL
Scottish Executive