

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

Minutes of the meeting of the Arts Centre Board
held on Thursday 22 June 2006

Present: Professor S Bassnett (Chair), Professor O Bennett, Ms L Holmes, Ms K Organ, Mr R Perkins, Mr A Rivett, Professor M Waterson, Mr B Woods-Scawen

Apologies: Dr A Ainsworth, Mr J Baldwin

In attendance: Mr N Darlison, Mr R Gray, Miss H Kinnear, Mr R Leonard (Development Executive, Development and Alumni Relations Office), Dr J Moss, Mr C Shaw (Officer, Combined Arts at the Arts Council England, West Midlands)

16/05-06 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Minutes of the meeting of the held on 9 February 2006 be approved;
- (b) That copies of the Minutes of the previous meetings should be circulated with the agenda and papers of forthcoming meetings of the Arts Centre Board.

17/05-06 Matters Arising

(a) Deputy Chair

CONSIDERED:

A proposal from the Chair to appoint a Deputy Chair who would preside in her absence.

RESOLVED:

That Professor O Bennett act as Deputy Chair in the absence of the Chair.

(b) Warwick Arts Centre Future Plan (Minute 12/05-06 referred)

CONSIDERED:

An oral report from the Director of Warwick Arts Centre on plans to deliver an improved customer experience, including:

- (i) the refurbishment of the catering facility;
- (ii) the closure of SoZo and the opening of a new bar facility;
- (iii) possible changes to the menu at EAT

RESOLVED:

- (iv) That changes to the catering facilities that enhanced the visitor experience, such as waiter service and hospitality packages, would be welcomed;
- (v) That the Director take forward comments and suggestions from the Arts Centre Board on the acoustic problems in the Centre and the opening hours of the bar;
- (vi) That the Director continue to liaise with a catering consultant and interior designer to discuss changes to the customer environment;
- (vi) That the Director prepare a complete Future Plan for consideration at the next meeting of the Board.

18/05-06 Membership of the Arts Centre Board

REPORTED:

That Mr C Foy had resigned from the Arts Centre Board.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That any suggestions for new Board members be circulated to the Arts Centre Board for comment;
- (b) That consideration should be given to recruiting members who would expand the field of influence and interest of the Board.

19/05-06 Director's Report

CONSIDERED:

A report from the Director of Warwick Arts Centre outlining recent developments concerning the Arts Centre, paper ACB 7/05-06.

RESOLVED:

(a) Butterworth Hall Refurbishment

That the following points be noted:

- (i) The refurbishment and revitalisation of the Butterworth Hall would be part of the University's Financial Plan from the next session;
- (ii) That as the refurbishment would require a six-month phased closure of facilities, the Board would need assurance of a robust business plan to cover the period;

- (iii) That the Director would present a draft programme for the refurbishment of the Butterworth Hall at a future meeting of the Board;
 - (iv) The refurbishment would cost around £4.2m with a financial commitment from the University required before the Arts Council of England or any other grant awarding body would consider awarding any grant.
- (b) Audiences

(i) Live performances

That the following points be noted:

- (A) Attendance at live performances had increased by 11% on the previous year;
- (B) That following a successful run 'Thatcher the Musical' would return to Warwick Arts Centre;
- (C) That Warwick Arts Centre had begun a three-year collaboration with Cheek-by-Jowl.

(ii) Customer Attendance at Film Showings

That the following points be noted:

- (A) Although Mintel figures demonstrate a national increase in film attendance, film attendance had fallen below the national average at Warwick Arts Centre;
- (B) That it be noted that Warwick Arts Centre screens art-house films rather than blockbusters screened at large multiplexes;
- (C) That Warwick Arts Centre would undertake market research to determine better profile of audience to aid with screening selections;
- (D) That Warwick Arts Centre would consider inviting a film representative to explore alternative methods of programming and screening selections;
- (E) That the conclusions of the market research and any meeting with a film representative be disseminated to members of the Board for discussion at the next meeting.

(c) Coventry Partnership

- (i) That it be noted that Warwick Arts Centre had received many plaudits for collaborative programmes with local schools;
- (ii) That the contribution that Warwick Arts Centre had made and would continue to make to the regional arts programmes be promoted.
- (iii) That the Arts Centre has received an award of £350,000 from the Coventry Partnership of Government Neighbourhood Renewal Finds (NRF) to undertake a large arts education project in 20 Coventry schools involving 3000 children working with 40 artists over a two year period.

(d) Staffing

- (i) Neil Darlison had been selected as a Clore Leadership Fellow and would report back to the Board on the findings of his research project.
- (ii) The Director of Warwick Arts Centre would report to the Board on the outcome of bids for two members of staff: and Operations Director and Deputy Box Office Supervisor.

20/05-06

Future Funding

CONSIDERED:

- (a) A report from the Director of Warwick Arts Centre on recent funding trends at the Arts Centre, paper ACB 8/05-06;
- (b) A future financial strategy for the Arts Centre.

RESOLVED:

- (c) That a key issue for the Board was finding means to close the gap between income and expenditure;
- (d) That it be noted that the Arts Council for England could not guarantee its level of financial support for the forthcoming year;
- (e) That the Director of Warwick Arts Centre and Professor Waterson meet to consider the figures in closer detail and report back to the Board at the next meeting;
- (f) That discussion of the financial policies be postponed until the outcome of the meeting between the Director of the Warwick Arts Centre and Professor Waterson.

21/05-06

Any Other Business

RESOLVED:

That the Arts Centre Board would send their warmest wishes to Dr and Mrs A Ainsworth.

23/05-06 Date of the Next Meeting

REPORTED:

That future meetings were provisionally scheduled for:

- 4.30pm on Tuesday 2 October 2006 (tbc)
- 4.30pm on Thursday 7 December 2006 (tbc)
- 4.30pm on Thursday 15 February 2007 (tbc)
- 4.30pm on Thursday 26 April 2007 (tbc)
- 4.30pm on Thursday 28 June 2007 (tbc)

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the first meeting of the Arts Centre Board in 2006-07 be rearranged for 26 September 2006 and that members of the Board be invited to attend the opening night of The History Boys following the meeting, noting that the performance would be preceded by a drinks reception;
- (b) That the Board invite the Vice-Chancellor and Mrs Thrift to join the Board for the drinks reception and opening performance of The History Boys;
- (c) That the number of meetings per year be decreased from five to four;
- (d) That Thursday 15 February 2007 be cancelled, but the date reserved for an extra (fifth) meeting, to be held only if necessary.