Dear Janet

Thank you for attending the Committee’s meeting on 15 September to discuss Creative Scotland's priorities and ongoing work.

It was useful to receive an update on the many developments and improvements put in place during the past two years. It has clearly been a period of great change at Creative Scotland and the Committee notes the broadly positive response from the creative sector, which is reflected by the significant increase in the satisfaction rate.

During the meeting, you undertook to provide us with some further information. I refer to the specific items below and would be grateful if you could provide this to the Clerk, at the above address. (Column references to the Official Report of the meeting are included for ease of reference.)

- There was discussion of Creative Scotland’s annual accounts, which are due to be published later this year (cols. 25-26). As was suggested, would you be happy to share the annual accounts with the Committee in advance of their publication?

- In relation to the Memorandum of Understanding between Creative Scotland and Scottish Enterprise, you referred to the positive dialogue between the two organisations and mentioned some further work that needs to be undertaken (cols. 33-37). Could you provide details of the work that has been undertaken and what work is still required in order to develop the MoU, and clarify how the creative industries strategy links into this work? Can you also tell us what you hope the MoU will achieve?
The Committee would like to receive information on the work placements (including apprenticeships, traineeships and internships) that have been supported by Creative Scotland funding, including an indication of the duration and nature of those placements and whether the people who held the placements were employed afterwards (col. 38). In addition, the Committee requests information about the work Creative Scotland is doing to expand modern apprenticeships in the creative sector.

In addition to providing the above information, the Committee seeks further clarification on a number of other points, as follows.

- In response to concerns raised by stakeholders that Creative Scotland’s film strategy does not include KPIs and measurable objectives, you said you had translated the strategy into an internal work plan and expected to produce a report after the first year of implementation of the strategy (col. 17). Can you tell us what the priority KPIs and measurable objectives are for the film strategy?

- You referred to the discussions taking place between Creative Scotland, the Scottish Government and Scottish Enterprise about establishing a film studio in Scotland (cols 17-18). Are you able to provide any further details of how those discussions are progressing, the outcomes that have been achieved so far and expected timescale for delivery?

- You suggested there were some gaps in the allocation of Creative Scotland funding across local authority areas and said that you wanted to do something about this (col. 23). How do you plan to ensure Creative Scotland funding is spread across all local authority areas?

- As recommended by the Economy, Energy and Tourism Committee, you said Creative Scotland intends to carry out a review of the games industry in Scotland (col. 27). The Committee would find it useful to have some further information on the work that has been undertaken so far and when you expect the review to be completed.

- There was concern raised in evidence to us that the Scottish Government’s decision to fund the Scottish Youth Theatre had “undermined” the ability of Creative Scotland to manage its funding strategy. In this context, there was mention of work to refresh the framework agreement to clarify roles and responsibilities (cols. 26-28). How is the framework agreement being changed to take account of this issue and when do you expect to publish the revised framework? Also, can you outline the process to be followed should similar circumstances arise again?

The Committee may wish to consider your responses to the points outlined above as part of its scrutiny of the Scottish Government’s Budget later this year. To allow this to happen, I would be grateful to receive a response from you by close on 13 November.
Finally, we note that Creative Scotland is in the process of collating the evidence on the deliverables and tangible outcomes from the first year of its 10-year plan, which will be available later in the year. We look forward to digesting this information, together with Creative Scotland’s other forthcoming reports and plans, in due course.

Yours sincerely

STEWART MAXWELL MSP
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