Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Relations Committee

Scotland’s Screen Sector

Supplementary written submission from the Association of Film and Television Practitioners Scotland

The following submission was sent to the Committee in advance of its meeting on 8 March 2018.

We are pleased to inform you that representatives of the AFTPS met with Jane Holligan and Allan Jack from the Cabinet Secretary’s office on Monday 5 March.

This meeting offered an opportunity to express our significant concerns about the proposal for the Screen Unit; we will happily circulate the minutes to you if of interest. However, questions remain unaddressed, which we would like to bring to the attention of the CTEER Committee:

- AFTPS has lobbied for many years, since the demise of Scottish Screen, for a National Screen Agency for Scotland. Why is this opportunity not being seized, with funding in place, to develop a standalone agency? Where are the costings and figures which apparently suggest it is financially unviable to do so?

- For the Scottish screen industry to compete on a global scale, it must be steered by people with significant international industry experience and contacts. We understand from Fiona Hyslop’s office that recruitment for the Screen Unit team has begun. As the senior management of CS and current board have no screen industry experience, who is guiding the process to appoint staff of this calibre?

- With the ongoing uncertainty about funding procedures, the continuity and development of projects at international markets will be affected, in turn having a knock-on effect on indigenous filming: what actions are in place to ensure that this does not happen?

- One SSLG recommendation is there should be an online ‘one-stop’ shop for filming in Scotland. As the Screen Unit readies to launch in less than a month on 1 April, what work has been done to ensure that this will be ready?

- AFTPS are concerned about the lack of engagement with key industry stakeholders in the development of the Screen Unit proposal. In addition, what specific consultation has been done with the network of local film offices, local authorities, key land management and historic building agencies who will bear the brunt of the promised doubling of production activity in Scotland?

- We would also advise that any industry experts consulted are not those in direct receipt of Creative Scotland funding.

Members of AFTPS Working Group: Alan J (Willy) Wands, Clare Kerr (line producers); Fiona Gavin (art director), Clea Tammes (unit publicist); Dr Belle Doyle (administrator).