Cross-Party Group on Culture and Communities

Tuesday 29 September 2026, 14.00

Minute

Present

MSPs

Q Manivannan MSP
Jenny Young MSP
Pauline Stafford MSP

Non-MSP Group Members

Culture Counts – Kathryn Welch
SLIC – Alison Nolan
SLIC – Marion Kunderan
SLIC – Steven McGinty
CILIPS – Sean McNamara

Apologies

Senga Beresford MSP
David Green MSP
Colin Beattie MSP
Murdo Fraser MSP

Culture Counts – Joseph Peach

Agenda item 1: Election of Office Bearers

Convenor: Q Manivannan
Proposed by: Jenny Young
Seconded by: Pauline Stafford

Co-Deputy Convenor: Jenny Young
Proposed by: Q Manivannan
Seconded by: Pauline Stafford

Co-Deputy Convenor: Pauline Stafford
Proposed by: Q Manivannan
Seconded by: Jenny Young

Secretariat: Culture Counts, Scottish Libraries and Information Council (SLIC) and Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIPS)
Proposed by: Jenny Young
Seconded by: Pauline Stafford

Agenda item 2: Workplan and areas of focus for the coming session

The group considered the learnings from the previous investigation of this CPG into 'Big Ambitions for Culture and Communities' (available at https://issuu.com/culturecounts/docs/_big_ambitions_-_report_of_the_cross_party_group_), and agreed that a focussed, targeted programme of enquiry would be a useful approach to maximise the remit and impact of the group. Attendees shared their perspective on possible thematic enquiries, and agreed the following:

How to maximise the opportunities of culture for and within communities, by:

- Making the most of recent commitments to increase funding for culture
- Exploring and feeding into commitments toward cultural legislation
- Widening (geographic and demographic) access to cultural opportunities
- Understanding and maximising the social impact of cultural provision
- Connecting practitioners and the culture sector with conversations and at national government level (Programme for Government, Public Sector Reform) and within local authorities.

Attendees agreed that inviting speakers that offer a range of perspectives was valuable, including artistic provocations, culture sector experts, those from other policy areas, and academia. Attendees agreed that the meetings were an opportunity to hear from a range of (geographic, demographic and artform) perspectives.

Agenda item 3: Practicalities of meetings

The group agreed to await news of formal re-registration of the CPG from the Clerks before committing to a next meeting date, but agreed that an anticipated meeting in November 2026 would be ideal, followed by a second meeting in March / April 2027.

Attendees discussed that a mix of online and hybrid (in-person and online) meetings were helpful in enabling the widest attendance. To maximise both culture sector and MSP attendance, Q Manivannan advised that Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday evenings were likely to be preferred meeting times. The group considered opportunities to raise the profile of the group, including a mailout when the group is re-formed, photo opportunities and press releases about CPG meeting outcomes, and potential opportunities for in-person meetings to tie in with other cultural events (Pitlochry Festival Theatre was mentioned as one potential host venue).

As an immediate next step, the Convenor will now submit the formal paperwork to request that the CPG is re-registered.