OFFICIAL REPORT
AITHISG OIFIGEIL

Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee

Thursday 20 June 2019

Session 5

The Scottish Parliament
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

Thursday 20 June 2019

CONTENTS

	Col.
ARTS FUNDING	1

CULTURE, TOURISM, EUROPE AND EXTERNAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
18th Meeting 2019, Session 5

CONVENER

*Joan McAlpine (South Scotland) (SNP)

DEPUTY CONVENER

*Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Annabelle Ewing (Cowdenbeath) (SNP)
*Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP)
Jamie Greene (West Scotland) (Con)
*Ross Greer (West Scotland) (Green)
*Stuart McMillan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP)
Tavish Scott (Shetland Islands) (LD)
*Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con)

*attended

THE FOLLOWING ALSO PARTICIPATED:

Fiona Campbell (Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland)
Jude Henderson (Federation of Scottish Theatre)
Irene Kernan (Craft Scotland)
David Laing (Glasgow Life)
Nick Stewart (Music Venue Trust)

CLERK TO THE COMMITTEE

Stephen Herbert

LOCATION

The David Livingstone Room (CR6)

Scottish Parliament

Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee

Thursday 20 June 2019

[The Convener opened the meeting at 09:01]

Arts Funding

The Convener (Joan McAlpine): Good morning and welcome to the 18th meeting in 2019 of the Culture, Tourism, Europe and External Affairs Committee. I remind members and the public to turn off their mobile phones, and any members who are using electronic devices to access committee papers during the meeting to ensure that they are switched to silent. We have received apologies from Tavish Scott MSP.

The first item on our agenda is an evidence session with two panels of witnesses as part of the committee's arts funding inquiry. I welcome our first panel of witnesses: Fiona Campbell, who is the convener of the Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland; Jude Henderson, who is the director of the Federation of Scottish Theatre; and Irene Kernan, who is the director of Craft Scotland. I thank all the witnesses for joining us today.

Given that they answered our call for evidence, witnesses will be aware that this is a wide-ranging inquiry into arts funding, which follows on from the committee's short inquiry last year into the issues that arose as a result of difficulties around the regularly funded organisation funding awards at the beginning of last year. We are considering the way in which the arts are funded in Scotland and whether we could do it better in general and, in particular, tensions between larger organisations, and smaller organisations and individual artists.

On funding as a whole, what needs to be done to make funding sustainable? What adjustments would you make to improve matters?

Jude Henderson (Federation of Scottish Theatre): Clearly, that is a very straightforward question.

First, there is a great deal of collaboration between artists and larger institutions in my sector. Yesterday, we had a members meeting in Aberdeen at which members reiterated their sense that stable on-going concerns, as part of a cultural infrastructure, are a good thing for artists, because they provide them with supportive, engaged, informed and mentoring communities in which they can make their work collaboratively, as all the work in our sector is made.

There are definitely issues around the questions of what our cultural infrastructure is, how we collectively decide what it is and how far beyond buildings it goes. Members have discussed the potential for considering entitlements to culture and what people should expect to have ready access to in any particular geographical area. Our members are absolutely keen to engage in that conversation as part of a wider conversation around what the cultural infrastructure for Scotland should look like. Importantly, that infrastructure would never be set in stone—there would be an on-going conversation about what a cultural infrastructure for Scotland should look like at any one time.

Fiona Campbell (Traditional Music and Song Association of Scotland): I will continue on from those important questions about what infrastructure is and what it consists of. I liked the point that it is not set in stone—it goes beyond stone.

Infrastructure on a physical level, such as travel and transport infrastructure, has a great bearing on cultural activity in Scotland. I did a lot of research, particularly through Voluntary Arts Scotland, which showed that travel and transport infrastructure—how people get to places—is one of the main barriers to their participation in cultural activity. For example, people wanted to go to the Howden Park centre in Livingston, but the last bus back to Linlithgow left at 7.30 pm. If people were reliant on public transport, there was therefore no way that they could engage in the evening activities. I have often said that if we get transport right, we can probably get attendance at cultural activities right.

The other issue is digital infrastructure; we all know that it is still lacking in certain areas of Scotland, and that people are not as connected as they would like to be. Sometimes the strangest places are not connected—for example, places that are near to urban areas, which one would expect to have all the necessary digital fibre and broadband and whatever. I applaud the fact that satellites and other ways in which we can support connectivity are being considered. That could play out in relation not just to people who make a living or sell things online but in relation to being able to connect with town-twinning associations, talk by email and do all the things that we can now do. We used to have to wait days for the post to turn up but now we can do a lot more things. We could use that increased connectivity to bring a lot more culture to Scotland, and to export more culture out of Scotland.

Interestingly, from the traditional arts point of view, we feel that people see the word "traditional" and often think that we must be very far behind on things—but we are not. In fact, the traditional arts

and a lot of the tradition bearers are often the first people to be the early adopters of cyber and digital work. Sheena Wellington, for example, is very active on her social media. We have to look at those other infrastructures that inform the culture and, importantly, the people who make those infrastructures relevant.

Irene Kernan (Craft Scotland): I agree with both of those points.

Speaking from the perspective of the craft sector, craft has a problem with visibility. Part of that is, indeed, to do with infrastructure. Although there is an excellent national network of production facilities—which is not as well known as it should be—there is a lack of security around studio spaces and studio buildings, in which there has been a lack of investment.

One feature of craft is the level of innovation in relation to material skills and knowledge, which transfers across different sectors and adds value in areas such as academia, business, health and science. Investment in the sort of infrastructure that will encourage that innovation is badly needed.

The Convener: Obviously, some organisations are centrally and directly funded by either the Scottish Government or Creative Scotland. Those organisations, such as the national performing companies, are deemed too important to fail. Then there is the RFO process in which organisations such as the Federation of Scottish Theatre compete for funds against individual theatre companies and artists, which emerged as a source of tension and debate during our inquiry last year.

Do we have the way in which we fund organisations right, particularly organisations that support the sector or that are considered too big to fail?

Jude Henderson: The short answer is no. The discussion that we had yesterday concerned people and honesty, and whether there are organisations that are deemed to be too important to a community in the way that you describe. That is not just around culture: some of our members are massively important in social and economic terms as players in their local communities. There is a real issue about ensuring that we do not remove that vital infrastructure.

Organisations such as ours are part of that infrastructure. The Federation of Scottish Theatre has been around for 43 years. We offer support to our members in a variety of ways. That plays back into the conversation about what the cultural infrastructure is and how we work out what it does. At our meeting yesterday, members talked about the need for a multistage funding process. There is a primary issue around arts funding in the round, which is that all of the time that is spent getting funding from the arts funder is time that could have been spent investigating other trusts, foundations or other collaborative or individual approaches to getting funding.

People mentioned Foundation Scotland as a good model of an organisation, in that it is possible to have a 20-minute phone call to determine whether the foundation is interested in funding what someone has to offer. They then get what is, essentially, a champion within that organisation, who takes them through the next stages. It is felt that those are respectful, human processes, which take account of how people are and how they work, and which do not try to fit everyone into a one-size-fits-all approach.

The three-year regular funding cliff edge puts the entire sector in a state of emergency—I do not think that it is an exaggeration to say that. Every three years, no one in the sector knows whether they will have a job after the next funding announcement. It is as stark as that. We have lost members because of funding being withdrawn in the last funding round. Members have asked me to mention that the human impact of receiving an email that means that they have lost their job is such that that is not a respectful way to treat people.

Regarding the multistage, multiyear or annual rolling process, some people go for one year of funding and others get two years of funding; some people basically have an assumption of five to 10 years of funding, which provides a stable platform for larger institutions to get in the investment that they need to be sustainable for the future. Three years is not long enough for my industry, and people are already programming beyond their funded allocations. An assumption of some level of core stability, however we decide to whom that goes, is something that we really need to have a conversation about.

Those are some of the key points that people raised about the multistage, multiyear process and about human and respectful approaches within that.

Fiona Campbell: As a volunteer writer of funding applications—I am not being paid for that side of things—my life could be a lot better and I could be doing a lot more arts activity, but I have chosen to ensure that we can support the traditional arts in Scotland, which I see as key to the identity of the country.

You might ask why a New Zealander is saying that. I am of the diaspora and I know that, if we do not nurture the traditional arts of Scotland at their root—that is a form of infrastructure, too—that will affect the leaves and the flowers and all the blossoming of it. A lot of people are very proud of

their Scottish roots—albeit some may be more tenuous than others. Scotland is very proud of how we have been able to contribute to the world—mostly positively, although I am aware that there are some issues around how we have contributed. The idea that people can come back and see where they come from is really important. People have often said that it is all about whisky, tartan and shortbread, but that is the more outdated view. Whisky is evolving, tartan is evolving and shortbread is evolving. I think that people have an outdated view. Sorry—that is a personal bugbear of mine.

09:15

From the point of view of the traditional arts, we must be aware that the language is another element of the infrastructure of culture. English aside, we have two very strong languages in Scots and Gaelic. When it comes to key organisations, the TMSA Keith branch runs the Keith festival, which has been going for more than 30 years. It is one of the area's key economic institutions; it is also one of the major reasons why Keith won the Scots toun award. It is important to recognise that, although the TMSA does not get regular funding, the TMSA Keith branch fortunately gets a bit of funding and support from its local community because it is recognised as being a key element of the town's economic activity.

It is sometimes difficult to ascertain what is of national importance. I would say that the Keith festival is of national importance, but it is run by a branch of a national organisation, not by a national organisation. It is a question of working out how important and significant an organisation is to a local community, as well as its national significance.

Irene Kernan: We are a national agency, but we support a sector that is largely made up of sole traders with small businesses. Our role is to enable them to develop their careers and their businesses in various ways. We can work to support makers very directly in ways that they would not be able to do by themselves. For example, we organise a show in London. We organise all the logistics for the makers and we promote them. The show is very much about selling work and raising their profile. For an individual maker, that would take an enormous amount of investment of time and resources, which they would probably not be able to manage by themselves, given the scale that they work at. There are examples that demonstrate how a national agency significantly benefits individual artists.

Fiona Campbell: I would like to make another point—I knew that there was something else that I wanted to say. It is also important to understand that a lot of the network organisations were set up by individual artists who wanted to join together with other artists, or by smaller organisations that wanted to come together to have a national voice or to be able to share concerns and get peer support. That is an important point to remember.

The problem is that the way in which the system works at the moment is such that it is a case of "versus" or "or" rather than "and". We need to make it more of an "and"-type system in which people understand where the ecology is, because some artists might not be getting the best use out of their networks.

The Convener: Before I pass over to Claire Baker, I ask members and panellists to keep questions and answers as succinct as possible, because we have another panel to hear from. We have until 10 past 10 for this session, and I am anxious to make sure that every member gets to ask their questions.

Claire Baker (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Lab): As the convener said, the inquiry came out of last year's consideration by the committee of Creative Scotland's funding. Should we be looking at how we cut the cake or should we be thinking about increasing the size of the cake? Jude Henderson mentioned in her written submission that there has been a real-terms cut of 12.5 per cent in the funding from Government and that it is predicted that there will be a 25 per cent cut over the next 10 years, and Fiona Campbell's written submission referred to the proposal that we should try to increase the overall amount of funding. Would the panel like to comment on that? If we should be trying to increase the size of the cake, how do we make the case for that?

Fiona Campbell: Many of us have been making that case for a large number of years. It has always been important—ultimately, it is a priority—to understand the social and economic value that is brought to the country by culture, creativity and all the work that is done in that area. It is also important to understand what investment of 1 per cent of the Scottish budget would do. It would release a lot more activity. It would enable a lot more artists to make a career, to stay in this country and to better support it with their creativity.

In the end, it is a question of priorities when the Government sets the budget. The culture counts statistics—I should have looked at them before I came today—show that there is a high level of support from the public, and the Scottish household survey also finds a high level of support for arts activities, so I do not think that people would begrudge that investment.

The issue is how it fits with the other funding infrastructure, such as national lottery funding. Unfortunately, that is not a devolved area—yet. I

read recently that Camelot spent £39 million on advertising the national lottery. The reason why it now has to advertise so much is because of deregulation. However, think of what that money could have done in the arts sector. For example, only half a million pounds goes to awards for all. Imagine what £39 million could do there.

Jude Henderson: Obviously, I would always advocate more money going into the culture budget. We give enormously good value for enormously small amounts of money, if I can say "enormously small". Think about what we already deliver on not very much and imagine what we could deliver with not very much more. That is always a primary objective for me. However, I think that there is scope to use what we have in better ways to enable us to drive more investment into the sector.

Claire Baker: Will the culture strategy that is being developed help to make the case? What is your understanding of the culture strategy? Is it about increasing resources or about expressing value? Do you have a clear understanding of what it is trying to achieve?

Jude Henderson: The draft that has come out makes the case for understanding the different aspects of culture. It is not yet clear how the strategy will drive investment in culture and lead to an understanding of culture's impact on other bits of the investment portfolio.

Claire Baker: Irene Kernan might like to come in on that. We have heard in evidence that, although we all know about the value of the arts to health and education, there does not seem to be much sharing of budgets. Do you have experience of receiving funding from areas other than culture budgets?

Irene Kernan: We have worked with NHS Scotland on small projects, which clearly deliver a lot of value. However, it is a bit frustrating. The difficult thing for the arts is that we are all struggling to manage and maintain our activities, but stand-still funding means cuts, which mean that we struggle even more. The message that we are getting is that we all need to be more sustainable and bring in more income from other sources, but that is difficult when we are so overstretched.

There needs to be a lot more connectivity across sectors. There is so much evidence of the value that the arts bring to almost every sector of society—we have academic and scientific research to show that—and those messages need to be articulated much more clearly and regularly if we are to open up other funding sources.

Alexander Stewart (Mid Scotland and Fife) (Con): I have questions on the local authority side of things. Does the funding of arts at local authority level fit in to a wider strategy at national level? If not, should it? How would that work?

Irene Kernan: Local authority funding is essential. We can see the impact of it being removed or eroded over the past few years. Local authorities can work closely with their communities and target funding in response to need or opportunity in a way that national funders cannot always do.

In Ireland, an interesting model has just started that compels the local authorities to commit arts funding within their budgets. Something like that would have to happen, but a rigorous review system would be required as well in order to ensure quality and sustainability of the activity that is funded.

Jude Henderson: Obviously, local democratic processes are local democratic processes and national democratic processes are national democratic processes. However, there is value in the idea. The culture strategy might provide opportunities by giving us a framework and enabling people to interpret it at the local level in ways that suit their local needs.

Fiona Campbell: I commend all the local authorities that are still able to produce some form of cultural budget and, in particular, those that offer small grants to small local organisations because, as has been mentioned, that close relationship is important. Local authorities also need to be able to sustain a certain level of cultural venues because, without places to meet, it becomes very difficult. Thankfully, there are places such as community asset exchanges and that kind of thing. However, from the point of view of traditional arts, a lot of which is about place, it is really important that the local authority values its heritage as well.

Alexander Stewart: Authorities that have given arts funding priority and continue to give it priority have seen some real expansion in the culture sector across their areas. That has been because they believe in its value and they have collaborated with organisations such as yours to try to make that expansion happen. Why should that not be the case everywhere?

Fiona Campbell: I think that the term is "postcode lottery". It is about making the case locally. It depends on the values and priorities of each council and how they are dealing with the cuts, or how they think they can best deal with those things.

In the councils that have completely cut their budgets, people are probably experiencing a poorer quality of life in general and it will be affecting other services. Again, we need to take a holistic approach and consider how, if people are happy, they tend to use the health service less,

and so on. That is just a case in point. The approach should not be that, instrumentally, councils have to do the arts; it is about looking at how the arts can be part of people's lives and how that makes a difference because it builds resilience and so on.

Alexander Stewart: Some local authorities have gone down the route of setting up a trust or arm's-length organisation to support culture. However, that has caused difficulties for some councils around how to maintain and sustain those organisations. How do we ensure that we have that equilibrium between the local and national levels?

Jude Henderson: We need a strategic framework that recognises the value of culture at its heart and allows people to implement that locally. We now have a national outcome for culture in the national performance framework, which we warmly welcome. As always, the question is how that will be interpreted on the ground. We have been working closely with culture counts, the umbrella body for all Scotland's culture organisations, to try to ensure that we get a measurement for that so that people can really see how it is working at local level.

Annabelle Ewing (Cowdenbeath) (SNP): To stick with the issue of funding for the moment, the written submission from Jude Henderson on behalf of the Federation of Scottish Theatre raised an interesting issue on the topic of collaborative funding approaches. The submission cites the city of Edinburgh place partnership, which

"involves funds from Scottish Government and the local authority which have to be matched by new private sponsorship".

Can we hear a wee bit more about that and why, in some circumstances, it could be a useful way forward, taking into account that, as Claire Baker said, the cake is the cake, more or less, and we need to look at innovative ways of increasing the size of the cake?

Jude Henderson: That partnership is a good example of collaborative funding that involves all the partners articulating clearly what they bring, what they can get and where the mutual benefit lies in the middle of that.

One of our members, the Pitlochry Festival Theatre, has secured a significant amount of funding through the Tay cities deal. That is clearly about the theatre articulating what it can offer that aligns with the strategic objectives of the local authority. Again, when it comes to external funders, we know that trusts and foundations target specific groups of people and look to support specific communities. It is always about putting the integrity of the art at the heart of things and the quality of the art being absolutely the most important thing.

It is then a matter of considering the broader impacts and the broader strategic priorities for that arts organisation, taking into account where those naturally align with the priorities for local authorities, trusts or other funders. If everybody is clear that they are interested in the best-quality work with the most impact, that makes it relatively straightforward, or at least less difficult, to identify where things are aligned. I believe that that drives greater benefit for everyone. Everybody puts a bit in and everybody gets out what they need.

09:30

Annabelle Ewing: As far as you are aware, is the City of Edinburgh place partnership unique in Scotland or do other local authorities adopt similar partnerships?

Jude Henderson: I am not sure. Creative Scotland has a place partnership strategy, but it has not been sufficiently resourced to deliver it across all local authority areas in Scotland. I believe that a match-funding approach is being introduced in Ireland, where the central Government offers funding to local authorities with the condition that it is matched. That might be a route that the committee could explore.

Annabelle Ewing: In the City of Edinburgh place partnership, it seems that there is a role for private sponsorship. In general, has that been looked into seriously—I do not want to say "exploited", which is perhaps not the best word—as a possible source of significant funding? It seems to me that, in life, if you don't ask, you don't get. That could be an area of activity if more attention was focused on it by all players, and it could be ripe with opportunity.

Jude Henderson: I think that it could. There is an issue of capacity and resource in the sector. When one pound has been taken away out of every four over the past 10 years, that means that we are operating at very slim margins. We would welcome support for collaborative approaches to driving that kind of additional income generation.

Annabelle Ewing: When national budgets from Westminster are cut by some £2 billion over 10 years, that has knock-on consequences. The Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs has done very well to protect culture funding as best she can.

Fiona Campbell: There are other organisations that may not be viewed as cultural organisations from the outset. A number of development trusts operate in a place format, as they are usually based in a particular island or other geographical area. The Edinburgh Old Town Development

Trust, which I am involved with a bit, has worked with the city council and Artisan Real Estate, a private company of developers, on the Canongate area development. It has a community centre that will host a lot of cultural activities, as that is a demand of the local area. There are other examples of similar collaborative moves to bring in private sponsorship here and there. The locations might not immediately look like cultural venues, but they are. That ought to be considered, too.

Irene Kernan: Foundation Scotland, which Jude Henderson referred to, is an interesting organisation that brings in philanthropic money and donations as well as business money and private funding. Its team are experts in managing relationships and nurturing donors and funders. The foundation is an open organisation that is good at matching up activity and organisations with funders. Having that sort of expertise within one organisation would be an interesting thing to consider for the arts, too.

Fiona Campbell: I agree.

Jude Henderson: I agree.

Annabelle Ewing: Thank you for that suggestion.

Kenneth Gibson (Cunninghame North) (SNP): Good morning, panel. You will be aware that West Kilbride is Scotland's craft town, but I wonder how many other people in Scotland are aware of that. Until this morning, I did not know about the Keith festival. Less than two weeks ago, we had the Arran folk festival, which I promoted on my Facebook page. The organisers got back to me to say, "Thanks. That helped to sell additional tickets."

My point is that many things are happening in Scotland that people would be interested in if they knew about them. Is there a way to act collectively? Instead of having organisations with very small budgets trying to promote their own events or what they are doing via social media or whatever, is there some way to co-ordinate such actions to ensure that people who may wish to attend or participate are more able to do so, because awareness of those events is raised?

Irene Kernan: I do not know whether you are aware of the newly launched campaign by the Scottish Contemporary Arts Network, the focus of which is raising the profile of all arts activities across Scotland. SCAN will soon approach all members of the Scottish Parliament about how they might raise awareness of the arts in their constituencies. Your point is very valid. As all the panellists have been saying, organisations and individuals in the sector are being really stretched just to deliver their work, so their promotional activity often falls to the side.

One of Craft Scotland's roles is to promote the work and successes of the craft sector and the individuals in it. We invest some resource in that, but it is still not enough, so campaigns such as the one by SCAN, in which the value of activity—

Kenneth Gibson: Do you feel that there should be a website on which every arts activity in the whole of Scotland could be logged as soon as it is organised? For example, if I decided to go up to Nairn in July and wondered what might be happening there at that time, I could go on to such a website and look for that. Alternatively, I might be able to come at the situation from the other direction, looking for activities, crafts or theatrical productions in which I was interested and finding places where they were happening, so that I might go there. Could we perhaps do something like that?

Irene Kernan: Well, yes, but a lot of mapping is already going on.

Fiona Campbell: I feel as though I should be doing an advert for the TMSA. I have here a copy of the association's events calendar leaflet, which is not just about its own events; around 60 or 70 organisations advertise their local folk festival events, services and so on through it. The calendar is published each year, around the time of the Celtic Connections festival. Of the 50,000 copies that are distributed, 30,000 are given out in Scotland for tourists and local people to pick up. In the past couple of years, the other 20,000 have been spread out beyond the border with England and have gone over to Ireland and into Wales.

We would like to take the calendar further. We used to get regular funding for it through the Scottish Arts Council, but now we have to make it pay for itself. People who want to be part of it now have to contribute something, which means that some have chosen not to do so. The calendar started as an initiative between the TMSA and the then Scottish Tourist Board, and it has been around for 20 years. We now work with VisitScotland on elements of it. For example, we did a marketing exercise that enabled us to take it out beyond Scotland. We are trying our best to promote it. Ideally, we would have given a pile of leaflets to each MSP who is here today, but, in the absence of those, I have at least made the committee aware that it exists.

Again in collaboration with VisitScotland, we have developed an interactive music map of Scotland. To use Mr Gibson's example, people who are going to Nairn can click on that area and see what is happening locally. We have got to a point with the map where we need more resources to enable us to continue building it. However, it does show that we are already trying to take such steps in the traditional arts.

Kenneth Gibson: It would be good if that could be done across all genres of the arts, because you would then get even more people going to events.

My final question is about the balance of arts funding. A couple of weeks ago, I went to see the opera "The Magic Flute", which was magnificent. I understand that the convener has seen it; other committee members might have done so, too. While I was writing a wee article for the *Voice for Arran* online magazine about Scottish Opera, which is taking productions out to 34 communities this year, I noticed that it gets £8 million in Government funding. That is a lot of money for just one area of what might be called the high arts. Clearly, you feel that there should be more arts funding in Scotland, but is its current balance right?

Fiona Campbell: It could definitely be better for certain areas that are not so well funded. For example, going back to the language side of things, if the Scots language were to have a level of funding similar to that of Gaelic, that would give it better prominence and support. More could definitely be done, but I would rather grow the pie than cut it more thinly. Those are all valid ways to enrich our culture but, ultimately, we need to put more money in. We should not continue to cut thinner slices of the pie; we should make a case for growing the pie.

Jude Henderson: Scottish Opera goes out to communities all over Scotland, which is not a cheap thing to do. Cutting the funding would inevitably have an impact on its ability to take that work beyond the central belt. That is another thing to think about with regard to the balance.

Kenneth Gibson: I was just playing devil's advocate. I wondered whether, if the pie does not grow—I do not know whether it will over the next few years, with all the uncertainties that are ahead—we can do better with the resources that we have.

The Convener: Mr Gibson raises an important point. Scottish Opera is directly funded. Can we do more to elevate the traditional arts to the same level?

Fiona Campbell: I would be pleased to have more support for traditional arts, because there are things that are undone or that could be done better if there was more money. I still feel that we should push for more pie rather than slice it up more. I come from a diverse musical and theatrical background, and I feel that there is a role for opera, although it might be that Scottish Opera should not be the only company to deliver it. That is an issue.

It is about offering the full range of activity. If we start saying that we can have only one thing, as opposed to everything else, that will mean that people will miss out.

The Convener: I do not think that Mr Gibson was saying that.

Kenneth Gibson: No, I was not saying that.

The Convener: I think that he was asking whether you think that there should be parity for the art forms that you represent.

Fiona Campbell: One of our directors from quite a while ago did a comparison of the funding at the time. We have not updated that, as we do not have the capacity to do it, but I think you would find that the traditional arts could do with more money and that they could be elevated, supported and enthused about more. A lot of people might have been forced to do Scottish country dancing at some point in their lives, which they have then disparaged, even though it is an important way for people to learn to move.

Kenneth Gibson: The first paragraph of your written submission says:

> "The budget allocated for public investment in the arts—especially for the government's main cultural agency—is proportionally far below what cultural activity's impact is on the economy and wellbeing of the country."

When I raised the issue, it was just to ask whether, from the money that is available—we will always be short of money—giving £8 million to Scottish Opera is the best way to ensure a boost to the economy and the wellbeing of the country. What would an extra £8 million do for your organisation, for example? I am asking whether we are getting the right balance and the most bang for our buck when it comes to the use of public money in promoting and stimulating the arts around Scotland.

That was the question that I was trying to ask—I was not picking on a sector that I am not fond of. We know that funding will always be an issue, so I just want to see how we can optimise it.

Fiona Campbell: I agree with you. Another point that I make in our submission is about the need to ensure that volunteer investment is supported. You talked earlier about private investment, but a lot of people put their own money in. That can mean anything from making sure that cultural venues stay open, so that people can continue their activities without huge amounts of expense, to helping people—when they want, every so often—to take a bit of a risk and try to develop something different from what they have done in the past. They might not find it easy to articulate their case, there might be no resources available locally from the local authority, Creative Scotland might require larger bids or there might not be a suitable small pot of funding available. That is where the Tasgadh small traditional arts

fund works really well, because it is at a good level to try something out. However, that does not exist for some of the other sectors. The only reason that the Tasgadh small grants funding exists is that Fèisean nan Gàidheal has been constantly making the effort to approach Creative Scotland to provide it. The original concept was there but we needed someone to lead on it, and Fèisean nan Gàidheal has the infrastructure to support it.

The Convener: I guess that everybody understands why we have a national opera company in the same way as we have a national theatre company, a national orchestra and a national ballet company. However, we do not have a national company for traditional arts or a national youth company that is directly funded. That was mentioned in some of your submissions and might become a theme of our inquiry.

09:45

Fiona Campbell: There is a difference of opinion over whether we should have a national performing arts company that is based on the traditional arts, because of the question of what its main purpose would be. Some people advocate it; other people feel that it would be better to promote what people already produce. There are two main camps. For example, if we had a travel fund to enable artists to go beyond the borders of Scotland, as well as around the country, with the new and exciting work that we are doing or to support the tradition in Scotland, it could be argued that we might end up codifying traditional arts as opposed to allowing them to breathe and develop, which is one of the reasons that they are still alive in Scotland.

Stuart McMillan (Greenock and Inverclyde) (SNP): I have a couple of questions, the first of which is on funding. One of the suggestions that has come to the committee is that there should be "a percentage for arts". The idea is that, if a development is taking place in a local authority area, a particular percentage should be allocated to the arts. Would you agree with that proposal? It would grow the pie rather than divide the pie further.

Fiona Campbell: That principle already operates, from a general purpose point of view. That is why I mentioned a community or cultural centre being developed in Edinburgh. I always advocate that that is a good idea. It is about developers understanding that, when we create the housing infrastructure, we need to create a community. There have been issues around developers building lots of houses but no cultural or community infrastructure. There might be the odd playground, but the developers do not necessarily consider shops—they expect people to drive to other places. That would be a good way to look at it. It is one option.

Jude Henderson: Yes, if it is about increasing the pie, it is to be welcomed. We warmly welcome the fact that culture has been protected. As the evidence says, the overall cut is much bigger than the one that has been delivered through the culture budget. The pressures are also there at the local authority level. I would welcome anything that helped us to increase the size of the pie by placing culture at the heart of decision making, so that people were always thinking about culture as a core part of the decisions that they made rather than as an add-on—as a necessity rather than a luxury. I often think, "What would the world be like if we didn't have arts and culture?" Immediately, everyone can see what a grey place it would be. We must support decision makers to put culture at the heart of their thinking about decisions that affect places, people and communities.

Irene Kernan: I agree that the investment would be welcome, but I also think that artists should be involved in decision making and at the planning stage for developments across communities. They would bring immense value at that stage. It would be valuable if, as well as receiving the income from investment, artists were included in planning and development.

Stuart McMillan: The submission from the Traditional Music and Song Association states that

"Leaving the EU has other challenges funding wise such as the loss of access to the collective cultural funding which is usually proportionally greater in return than the proportion of the funding the UK contributes."

Can you elaborate on that, please?

Fiona Campbell: I understand from the information that I have got from attending seminars and sessions about European Union funding that, when the United Kingdom takes part in the various strands of cultural funding that come from the EU, we have often done pretty well out of them. Unfortunately, the UK has only recently become a more active partner in a lot of those creative collaborations across Europe. Apparently, we are quite well liked on the continent, because we are good at evaluation, monitoring and reporting. We bring those skills partly because we have had to do it for a longer time than some of our counterparts in other countries. The issue is that, from what I can see, that money will potentially not be replaced.

Another strand of EU funding is the social and infrastructure funding. That money has benefited culture: venues have been built, transport is better and social capital has been built up. It is very rare that if we collaborate and bring money together, we get less out of it.

The issue is that we have seen no indication from the UK Government in the negotiations that it intends to join such collaborations as a non-EU member state. That can be done—Switzerland and Norway both put in some money so they can get the value out. Of course, the value goes beyond money to the benefits of the collaborations themselves, such as the things that people learn and the peer support.

Beyond culture, there is also education and lifelong learning and the Erasmus scheme. There is a lot in there that people have not realised will not be there any longer. I think that they will notice it when it is gone.

Stuart McMillan: Sadly, I very much agree with what you have just said. Our committee has undertaken work on Erasmus, and it is clear that there is a huge amount of uncertainty.

I have one final question, which colleagues touched on earlier, with regard to the spread of funding across the country. I represent an area that is not a city. There is a perception that the cities and areas with larger populations obtain more money per head in comparison with areas such as mine. In your opinion, is that a fair assessment? That question is for any of the panellists.

Fiona Campbell: In general, that often happens. There is a larger concentration of groups because there are more people and there is more activity. I do not have figures to hand that tell me the exact situation. I am aware that, in the traditional arts, a lot of the small groups are interested in promoting their local traditions, so there is often quite good activity in that respect. I imagine that they probably do not get so much in terms of a good funding share, but that is often because they are working at a level that means that they do not necessarily seek funding. Again, that is where venues are often important, because they offer an opportunity to come together and meet somewhere and to collaborate, which is really important.

Jude Henderson: That would be a key part of looking at cultural infrastructure and, potentially, at entitlement. There is a human right to arts and culture. We need to look at young people in particular and their entitlement to access arts and culture of different kinds and in different ways near them, whether that involves participating or consuming.

Many years ago, when Creative Scotland was set up, it was suggested that there could be local arts officers in local areas. Anecdotally—again I do not have the figures to hand—I am aware that local authorities have reduced the number of arts officers. That means that the capacity at local authority level to engage in the collaborative dialogue that would support everyone, and the grass-roots artist provision without which, ultimately, nothing else happens, has been eroded over time. Our members would welcome anything that could be done to strengthen capacity in order to build those partnerships to support local artists in ways that are more efficient so that, as Irene Kernan said, individual artists do not have to reinvent the wheel multiple times.

Irene Kernan: I want to add to what Fiona Campbell said. It is very hard for artists to participate when they have to travel quite far. Recently, we attended an event that was organised by the Argyll and Isles Culture Heritage and Arts Assembly network. It was clear that it was a huge effort for artists to attend that networking event, valuable as it was, because they had to spend up to six hours travelling to and from the venue. Such an event means a day out of the studio for artists, and they might also have to arrange for care. Funding is generally not available to provide the sort of support that would enable artists to build up their professional development; such funding would be really useful.

Ross Greer (West Scotland) (Green): I would like to hear your thoughts on how we support grass-roots art at an individual or small group level. A number of the written submissions that we received, including the one from the Federation of Scottish Theatre, mentioned bursaries and microfinancing. What are your thoughts on what that would fund? How open ended do you imagine that being? Would you like to see a system, if one was established, that was quite specific about things such as travel, accommodation and materials?

Jude Henderson: Our membership ranges from individual artists who produce their own work to Scottish Opera and the National Theatre of Scotland. What they need is time and space. While specific funds for training, travel, networking and writing bids is important, making art is about time and space. I guess that I would advocate for an element of thinking in that decision-making process, whether that be through a universal benefit or bursary support for individual artists.

That could be distributed centrally, or through the existing network or a new network of cultural infrastructure. Many of my larger members already offer residencies, artist support, events, mentoring and so on. A wide range of activity is offered through the current regular funding network, so it might be that there is capacity there to build on to support individual artists.

Ultimately, however, it is about time and space.

Ross Greer: Would that be best administered through the individual organisations rather than Creative Scotland issuing to individual artists?

Jude Henderson: There are different opinions about that. We would not want there to be a situation in which individual artists felt that they were unable to access the central funding body; that does not feel right. At the same time, as I think I said earlier, there are already supportive, engaged and informed people who are seeing the work. That is one of the things that people always say about funders—they do not always get the chance to see all the work because so much is happening. People who work in regularly funded organisations are often aware of what is happening and what work is going on.

There would have to be safeguards in place to make sure that there was appropriate diversity in anyone who was selected; I am sure that we would all support that.

It feels as though there are mechanisms out there for supporting individual artists, and it might be possible to build on those in addition to building things from scratch. However, in this as in everything, a one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to work.

Fiona Campbell: Time and space works for the career artists and small, grass-roots organisations. Some of them are very happy and working at a level that is sustainable because they do not rely on an external feed of money. However, they sometimes want to try something new that they see as a bit risky, and that could be the time and space that they need to put out some extra leaflets to get new people involved, or to try a different space in the next village because they might want to do the same thing over there. One of the organisation's members might be prepared to travel over there, but they need the money for a space or something along those lines.

I would be anxious to not lock down the money and say, "It's only for this", because that stifles creativity. I know that Voluntary Arts Scotland has some microgrants so that groups can apply for what they need to develop. I sit on the grant panel for Tasgadh small arts funding and we get a wide range of applications from the artist who is trying to develop their artistic practice, to an organisation that is trying to bring more participant activities or a different type of music within the traditional arts to an island.

It is about trying to shape the provision in a way that does not close it. I echo what Jude Henderson said about professional development and the idea of being able to access opportunities. There have been times when people do things on an amateur basis and do not expect to be paid for it, but sometimes they have a professional development need as do the career artists. Allowing them to travel and pay the fee could make all the difference to the community that they will bring stuff back to.

10:00

We know that some activities cost more than others. It is a question of being able to take the risk of doing something a bit more expensive and seeing whether people want to do it. People might be quite happy to pay another fiver when they know what it is like. We are talking about the idea of trying something. Risk is important—people need to be allowed to fail more often. We hear a great deal about the need to always be successful and to always be smiling. It is important that people can take risks, and that is being lost in the defence of public funding. When there are smaller pots of money, people become more risk averse.

Irene Kernan: Flexibility of funding is important. There is value in microfunding and seed funding, but there also needs to be a more sustained approach so that funding can be available over a longer period. That can make an enormous difference for individual artists or smaller organisations. It is very hard for an artist to develop their career or their ideas in a finite period. It is essential that a guarantee of sustained funding is provided, too.

Ross Greer: Jude Henderson mentioned the idea of a universal benefit for individual artists. That has come up in previous sessions, when we have talked about the concept of a universal basic income. Four local authorities in Scotland have committed to undertake trials on that. What impact do you think that a UBI would have on the arts and the creative sector? If those trials go ahead, how should artists and the cultural sector in those four areas be considered when the trials are designed?

Fiona Campbell: I think that we should try that and that artists should be involved. As well as helping people who want to make a career out of the arts and crafts, it would enable other people to expand that side of things, which might make them happier and more productive.

When I read the evidence that was given to the committee, it occurred to me that there could also be a universal basic income for groups. There are important organisations at grass-roots level that do not necessarily want to get too big. We always think that bigger is better, but sometimes it is important to keep small and fleet of foot. A universal basic income could make a lot of difference to the ability of some groups to source other income to support people. For example, they could support people to write funding applications. There is a lot of expertise out there, but groups cannot afford to have the capacity to help other people.

That is just a thought. There could be a universal basic income for certain groups, not just for individuals.

Jude Henderson: Of course, our industry has many freelancers at its heart. Members who write applications struggle to survive without funding while they wait for the results of those applications to come in. Artists live in and are part of local communities and can be the bedrock of those communities, and I would certainly advocate the sector being involved in the universal basic income trials. As a sector that is already—quite literally, in some cases—a gig economy, it might be a really fertile test bed. We could find out how a UBI would work in practice and what people need.

I know from speaking to members who received the benefits that it used to be possible to get back in the 1980s that people were able to get housing benefit, and that they could get an extra £10 a week in unemployment benefit to set up as a small business. Many creative people did that, and much of the flourishing that we see now is a direct consequence of people having access to a roof over their head and a basic level of money coming in for a period to enable them to get going. That is on the professional side; there is also the community and engagement side of things.

We do not want too rigid an approach. There needs to be flexibility to enable people to make the right contribution and to be able to grow their own practice in ways that are good for their community as well as for themselves. Ultimately, that will be economic, because some of those people will fly—some of them will be the people who make the money that comes back into the system and supports everyone else in future.

The Convener: Thank you very much. That was a very interesting and wide-ranging discussion. I thank the panel members for coming in to speak to us.

10:05

Meeting suspended.

10:12

On resuming—

The Convener: I welcome our next panel of witnesses: Nick Stewart, from the Music Venue Trust; and David Laing, head of arts, music and cultural venues at Glasgow Life. I thank both of them for coming to give evidence today. We are considering our cultural infrastructure in this inquiry session, and by speaking to this panel we will be able to talk about the importance of our capital infrastructure.

As part of the inquiry, the committee has done outreach. Last week, we went to the Fire Station Creative in Dunfermline, which was very interesting, as a new cultural venue has been created out of nothing. The evidence that we took from artists from across Fife certainly showed that having that piece of capital infrastructure—that additional venue—had been transformative for individual artists and organisations. It certainly brought home to me the importance of capital in transforming opportunities for artists; indeed, how we support individual artists is a big theme of our inquiry.

I invite our witnesses to give us their views on the existing capital infrastructure that is available to support the arts across Scotland, and on what particular challenges artists face in relation to showcasing their work. Who would like to start? Mr Laing?

David Laing (Glasgow Life): I think that I have been volunteered.

Although I can speak mainly on the perceived issues in Glasgow, some of those issues might also apply across the country.

In the city of Glasgow, as in other cities, there is significant capital infrastructure—or building-based cultural infrastructure—which usually takes the form of venues. At some point, I would like to talk about the role that key festivals and local arts officers play in that infrastructure. However, on physical infrastructure, the evidence that the committee heard in Fife would certainly apply to Glasgow.

10:15

When arts venues are established in certain geographic areas, they have a transformative effect on opportunities for artists. They do that in a number of ways that are linked to the challenges that artists face.

A key point that we hear a lot from artists and organisations that we work with is that venues need to offer time, space and support for the development and making of new work, as well as the showing and performance of work to audiences—and that they succeed more in boosting the artistic sector when they do that. Not all venues have the variety of spaces that would allow that support to take place alongside the public-facing spaces for audiences to attend works, yet being able to offer both is a key function of a good strong network of arts venues, or of an arts venue in a particular location.

The other important point is that having venue-based producers, individual art form specialists and curators is a crucial way for individual artists to connect, network and find out about and take advantage of opportunities at the local, national and international levels. That is a good pipeline for an artist, from working completely alone as an individual to having their first small show in a venue that is internationally recognised, which

puts them on other radars. Venues that function really well—Tramway is a good example in Glasgow—offer a range of sizes of shows and spaces so that people can develop and present work over a period of time. Thus, they support individual artists through the whole of the initial and mid-career stages as well the fully professional, high-profile career stage. They support all those levels in different ways. That is one way in which venue infrastructure is important and functions currently.

On the pressures and challenges that venues face, in many cases, venues are funded entirely locally, perhaps by only the city council or local authority, and there is huge pressure on resources and funding streams. While there is a lot of work and attention going on behind the scenes to address that, it is a demographic and public sector finance pressure. As a result, all the beneficial ways in which a good arts venue functions and supports individual artists to make work—and audiences to see that work—are under pressure as well.

Nick Stewart (Music Venue Trust): Grass-roots music venues benefit artists because we are the research and development arm of the UK music industry. Last year, the industry was worth £4.4 billion, yet the places where rock and pop artists—and the wider versions of that part of the sector—hone their craft and initially perform are seriously under threat due to crumbling infrastructure. In short, the request from the Music Venue Trust is for funding to be put into infrastructure to improve the quality of the venues, and for some money to be put into talent development programmes through which we could put the next generation of talent on in a better environment than the environment that we currently have and then take them up to the next level.

The Convener: What are the reasons for the decline in the number of venues?

Nick Stewart: They are many reasons. Live music is obviously very popular at the moment, and it continues to have great growth at the top end. However, increased rent costs and stagnating ticket prices are factors. Lower sales of alcohol are also a big problem at the moment. GMVs seem to be seen as pubs that put on music—at least, that is what our rateable value is tied to. Traditionally, the sector has always existed completely in the commercial sphere, but there is now an issue because we have market failure. We can no longer lose money on ticket sales but get by through making up the rest in alcohol sales. In the longer run, that is not sustainable.

The Convener: How should that problem should solved?

Nick Stewart: There should be funding for grass-roots music venues. A similar set of evidence to what you were sent was sent to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, and one of the recommendations was that Arts Council England should fund grass-roots music venues. I will move quickly on to the big news, which is that, since we submitted our evidence, Arts Council England has agreed to establish a ring-fenced fund of £1.5 million for grass-roots music venues in England, and it has seconded a member of staff to the Music Venue Trust to ensure that grants are applied for and the money is received. The money is all to be paid out by March next year.

I do not think that Creative Scotland has a good idea of how it will be able to provide a proportionate fund, but we are beginning to have some discussions with it.

The Convener: You have started to speak to Creative Scotland about that. Do you think that there is the same level of understanding of the nature of the problem in Scotland that there is down south?

Nick Stewart: The conversation that we are having is part of the growth of that understanding.

The Music Venue Trust has been around for five years. I often speak for the trust, but I am also a small venue operator—I run a place called Sneaky Pete's on the Cowgate, not far from the Parliament. We have started to have those arguments over the past few years. Last year, there was an understanding that we would try to get more of a pipeline of investment from the industry, but as Arts Council England recognised straight away the importance of supporting what could otherwise become crumbling infrastructure, I think that it is now on Creative Scotland to look at what it can do. If we have a situation where a venue in Berwick-upon-Tweed can apply for funds but a venue in North Berwick cannot, there is clearly an issue of parity.

The Convener: How do you define a grass-roots music venue? Does Arts Council England have a definition that it uses to determine who can apply?

Nick Stewart: There is a definition, which you will have received in the evidence. Essentially, we are talking about a network of just over 500 smaller music venues that are mostly independently owned, that programme primarily new music and that have direct relationships with artists. In general, GMVs have a capacity of less than 500. They are the places where the future stars learn their trade.

The Convener: Thank you. That is very interesting.

Claire Baker: I have a question for David Laing. I hope that he will be able to answer it, although it might be better directed to the chief executive of Glasgow Life. We have heard that there is a degree of disappointment in the operation of trusts. I do not know whether that has developed because we have been through a time of austerity when funding to local authorities has been tight, which has had an impact on the few trusts that we have in Scotland.

Is there merit in the trust model when we are looking to have sustainable funding? Have trusts been effective in drawing in additional money? Have local authorities that have not moved to the trust model found that more challenging?

David Laing: Information on that is available and I will be happy to supply it after the meeting, but my broad understanding is that the answer to those questions is yes. When we look at the proportions of income and expenditure that charitable trusts such as Glasgow Life have passing through their hands, there has been a shift.

The proportion of income that is accounted for by grant that comes directly from the local authority has reduced significantly, and the proportion from other sources of funding has increased, whether that is from commercial or semi-commercial trading; the leveraging in of grants from external funding bodies and other types of trusts, which may specialise in particular areas; art form-specific funds; or European and international funds.

My understanding is that there is some evidence that there has been success in both reducing certain costs and increasing other funding streams that can go into the mix so that the proportion is rebalanced over time. I will be happy to supply more information on that.

Claire Baker: That would be great—thank you.

I asked the first panel questions about how to cut the cake and whether we should be increasing the size of the cake. I think that you were both in the room at that point. The cake has changed into a pie in the course of the morning. [*Laughter*.] I do not think that anyone will disagree with the idea of increasing its size, but in your submissions you both discuss how it is cut.

David Laing says:

"Existing power structures exhibit institutional racism, ableism and classist discrimination",

adding that there should be consideration of

"the benefits of cultural, social and economic prosperity"

for everyone. He also puts forward arguments around social inclusion and discrimination.

On funding for music organisations, Nick Stewart gives figures showing that 36 per cent of funding goes to classical music and less than 5 per cent goes to contemporary music. I suppose that that links to Kenneth Gibson's earlier question about Scottish Opera—

Nick Stewart: I should clarify that zero per cent of the regularly funded organisations were grass-roots music venues, which is the sector that I can specifically talk about.

Claire Baker: Yes—your submission goes on to say that no support at all goes to the area that you represent. Is more funding needed, or are there issues with how the current funding is distributed?

Nick Stewart: Clearly, there should be a bigger cake, or a giant pie. If there is a question about how much should be spent, proportionally we are not asking for a lot, but we think that it should be more than zero.

Up until the recent funding announcement, the figure in England was very small—it was 0.03 per cent of Arts Council England spending on RFOs. However, we are not talking about RFOs or national portfolio organisations; we are talking about really targeted funding, which has to come from a strategy. Creative Scotland's strategy is a little bit up in the air at the moment and until we have a strategy, we cannot create those targeted funds.

I would not like to pin it down to just rock 'n' roll, but it is easier to understand what grass-roots music venues tend to do when we talk about them in the context of the rock 'n' roll sector, research and development—[*Interruption*.] I am sorry, I have lost my train of thought.

GMVs should be seen as culturally prestigious. Money goes to ballet, theatre and opera; money goes directly from the Government to portfolio organisations before we get to the money that is then distributed by Creative Scotland.

In terms of people's sense of who they are as Scots and people's perception of what Scotland is, GMVs are hugely important to Scotland's cultural output. However, in terms of the amount of funding that they get, they are not viewed as prestigious at all. That viewpoint needs to be changed.

There is a common idea that Scots love to go to see live music, and in Glasgow the venues could not be busier—and there are a huge number of them there. However, where does the funding go? Historically, because GMVs have always existed in the purely commercial sphere, they have not had those conversations with potential funders such as Creative Scotland.

When I went to see Creative Scotland recently, I learned that someone from a venue such as mine had not been to have a long chat with it before.

That chat might lead to other chats—this is all quite new. We have not had a seat at the table and if you are not at the table, you are probably lunch.

Claire Baker: Just before I bring in David Laing, perhaps you could say a wee bit more about market failure, which you mentioned earlier. Tennent's used to sponsor a network of local grass-roots venues; it also supported bands on tour, back in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. It then moved its support more towards T in the Park and other big festivals. We have seen huge growth in ticket sales at that end of the music business, but you report that there has been a fall at the more grass-roots level.

Nick Stewart: I do not think that it is true to say that there are fewer sales at GMVs, but the standard of the infrastructure is dropping because there is not quite enough income coming in. Ticket prices are stagnating. Live music as a whole is more popular. The venues that are doing very well are doing very well; the venues that are not doing very well are doing poorly. When you lose such a venue, you tend not to get another one to replace it, particularly outside Glasgow and Edinburgh. There is definitely a problem with market failure in more rural areas.

10:30

Claire Baker: In your submission, you said that £1.5 million has come from the Arts Council England. That is a recent announcement. In the sound and vision report, you talked about matched funding from the commercial end of the sector.

Nick Stewart: That is correct. If the correct funding is put in place, the Music Venue Trust has a plan to unlock a lot of matched funds in order to kit out 100 grass-roots music venues by 2023. The amount of money that Arts Council England is giving in England would not be quite enough. However, with the correct funding for infrastructure from Creative Scotland, there could be a serious improvement in the standard of venues that we have in Scotland. It would be fine if the funding came from elsewhere, but Creative Scotland is probably the correct instrument to give funds to grass-roots music venues to improve infrastructure. It would probably come through the creative industries team, but we are just beginning to have those conversations.

Claire Baker: The creative industries team takes another tangent—my understanding is that Scottish Enterprise still has the budget for creative enterprises and industries and that Creative Scotland does not have much of a budget for that at all.

Nick Stewart: The officer I speak to, who takes care of the creative industries team, is at Creative Scotland. I am not sure exactly where his funds come from.

Claire Baker: As a business, do you have any involvement with Scottish Enterprise? Does it give any support to small businesses that you are aware of?

Nick Stewart: No, although that is another set of conversations that have not generally begun. Perhaps Glasgow Life has more of those conversations; perhaps David Laing can speak on that.

Claire Baker: I will try not to take up too much time, but I will go back and put my original question to David Laing. You have commented on the distribution of funds and the fact that the cultural sector is not representative of the general population; you have also expressed concerns about diversity and accessibility. Do you want to say more about that?

David Laing: Yes. It is widely acknowledged that in some ways the professional arts sector is not hugely diverse. Therefore, somewhere in the system, there are mechanisms at work that tend to exclude some people. I do not think that we have the answers, but we believe that the issue should be considered, alongside the health of the arts sector.

I will come back quickly on one point. I agree with Nick Stewart about the historical perception of music as an art form and how it should be supported, particularly contemporary music or pop and rock. In our evidence, we also suggest that small music venues, small musical groups and individual musicians should be considered for support on an artistic basis, in the same way that other art forms are considered for support.

If you can remind me of the point that you were asking about, I will try to come back to it.

Claire Baker: That answer is fine.

Nick Stewart: I would like to say something quickly on diversity. If we support music—and art forms generally—from the grass roots up, we will automatically get diversity. The traditional art forms, by which I mean those that have tended to get funding, such as theatre, opera or ballet, can all say that they have people from lots of different economic backgrounds and lots of ethnic diversity, but they are still making the same kinds of art forms. We will get the next levels of development in art forms when we get people from different backgrounds to represent the types of art forms that they come from, not what they have been schooled into through the conservatoire.

Ross Greer: My questions will follow on from the point that Nick Stewart made about prestige. A lot of that is included in David Laing's written evidence. It is obvious that opera has prestige;

hip-hop often does not. How do we tackle an issue such as that within our public bodies? It seems that it ultimately comes down to who is in the room when funding decisions are being made or when the structure of the funding pot is being decided. How do we increase diversity at the level that distributes the funds? Obviously, we want to increase it in the arts themselves, but it strikes me that we would have to go upstream in order to do so.

David Laing: That is a great question, and it is one that has been discussed a fair bit among the organisations, artists and institutions that we work with.

There are a few broad themes that organisations tell us it might be beneficial to consider. A key one is for the arts sector to be audience and artist led, so that it has a professional element to it. However, it also needs to be opened up. If we can involve individual artists at the grass roots, in the very early stages, that should help to promote diversity and overcome what we might call institutional inertia around what is funded and what is perceived to be prestigious. Through its work, Tramway has found that art forms that are experimental or difficult to categorise are very fertile ground for new ways of thinking and working that are more exciting and diverse and less defined and formal than other art forms.

It is very important to have the organisational and financial capacity to take risks, experiment and work from the level of individual artists, building things up around that capacity as opposed to having the structure and organisation leading everything and then funnelling the money through only those artists and art forms that fit the institution's ideas.

The socioeconomic factors that lead to lack of diversity in the professional arts sector often relate to its legacy of being based on people being able to work on free internships or having support that enables them to go off and do stints in other arts organisations, to start building their CVs. Such opportunities are not, by any means, open to everyone.

There is a parallel issue around individual artists not being able to participate in that way or to join some types of consultations or selection panels, even when institutions try to have wider panels that do not just have salaried arts professionals sitting on them. It is important that they can, and efforts have been made to have artists who are panellists paid as a salaried professional would be for such work. An institution might send an arts officer or other specialist along to sit on a panel to select work from individual artists. The process might take a whole day, which a panellist who is an artist might have planned to spend on chasing up leads for commissions that might make the difference between their surviving for another year or not.

Our organisation has made specific changes in how it pays for attendance at consultations and supports freelancers when it commissions work, but we do not have enough resource to carry out a wholesale revolution in that regard. We are, though, always trying to take conscious steps towards working more in that way. It seems to be a significant issue regarding the end results and who is in the positions of influence that you mentioned.

Ross Greer: Nick, you mentioned that the recent discussions that you have had with Creative Scotland are perhaps ones that it has not had for quite a while, as it does not often engage with your sector. Do you feel that there is a perception that Creative Scotland's doors would be closed if folk approached it, or does it seem so distant that most people in the sector would not know where to start or the first person to get in touch with there to arrange a meeting or get discussions going?

Nick Stewart: I feel that Creative Scotland has the will to do something for the grass-roots music venue sector. More recently, music officers there have tended to be people whose background is contemporary with those of venue organisers. They have struggled to work out how they would benefit, and they do not get enough applications.

In the past, venues that have applied for open funding, especially from the made in Scotland fund, have tended not to receive it, the reasons for which are partly about the specifics of open funding—for example, the cycle of time that it takes to get an application in. If I was to book a show really far ahead of schedule, it would be for November, but if I was to apply for funding from the made in Scotland fund, I would have to apply now to put on a show in August next year. We are very organised, but not all GMVs have the privilege of being as organised as we are, because they are busy fixing the loos. We have not received those funds, because we have had to say, "We will put on someone we think will be great who will be touring around then," and that just does not cut it for an application.

The current open funding model is slightly ill suited to funding talent development programmes or touring as part of contemporary music schedules. There is a better model for that. Sneaky Pete's, which is the venue that I run, is almost unique in the UK in that we have a small bursary of £10,000 a year from the PRS Foundation, which we spend exclusively on artists' fees. Because we have a track record of putting on great bands and developing careers, we receive a bursary that we are allowed to spend on

the artists we choose to spend it on. I cannot quote anyone, but Creative Scotland has said that it would potentially be open to the idea of running talent development programmes along those lines. Those conversations are just beginning. Right now, the big ask from the Music Venue Trust is, first, for investment in infrastructure and, secondly, for investment in talent development programmes, but if talent development programme funding comes first, we will take it.

David Laing: Nick Stewart makes an important point, which reminds me of something that I should have mentioned in response to the question about tackling the lack of diversity. It can be very powerful when key venues in key locations whose teams or specialists are deeply connected to their sector, such as Sneaky Pete's or Tramway, or organisations such as Glasgow Life, hold smaller sub-streams of funding that they, in turn, distribute. I can give a couple of examples of schemes that we are involved in managing on behalf of Glasgow City Council. One of them is the arts development scheme under the integrated grant fund; another is the visual art makers development scheme. In both cases, we find that the individual artists and small organisations that are successful in applying for those funds tend, for various reasons, to be much more diverse than the bigger organisations that secure other streams of funding.

There are two main reasons for that. First, because Glasgow Life has the capacity to deal with a lot of the bureaucracy and management and to do the form filling that went along with getting the original total fund, we have been able to take all of that out of the equation for smaller arts organisations and individual artists. There is a very light-touch, quick and simple system whereby they apply to us and our officers do all the work of translating that into what the original funder—whether it is the council or another body—requires.

That is an important support role that individual artists need the sector to provide, because there is bureaucracy involved. Although organisations want to be artist led, artists do not necessarily want to deal with that bureaucracy. It can be very powerful to have schemes that are embedded in the local area, with arts officers who are deeply connected to the area and who can create a light-touch process that it is quick and easy for the artist to go through. The arts officers can take care of everything—the upward flow of reporting, evaluation, equalities tracking and so on.

We know that the organisations that benefit from such smaller schemes tend, for various reasons, to be much more diverse than the arts sector as a whole. They also tend to be quite fragile organisations, and, in many cases, small grants of £2,000, £3,000 or £5,000 are crucial to their survival. They work with communities or individual artists or art forms that are otherwise underrepresented. If we could manage a bigger fund in that way, we could amplify that effect quite considerably and relatively straightforwardly.

10:45

Their other important role is to make sure that artists who might come from a different cultural background and who might be new citizens of Glasgow have not just locally accessible funds but locally accessible people who can connect them with wider, high-profile opportunities such as slots at one of the prestigious festivals that Glasgow Life or others might be involved with. If we have those local officers and invest in that capacity, we can connect people with those opportunities, to ensure that they can access those platforms and that it is not always the same people who are getting the benefit. The infrastructure of festivals and high-profile showcasing moments helps to give artists' careers a real step up, and I do not think that their importance can be overstated.

Stuart McMillan: On a point of clarification, I noted, in Nick Stewart's submission, a reference in paragraph E(i) to "Significantly reduced audience attendances". In response to a question from Claire Baker, you said that it is not necessarily the case that fewer people are attending venues. I would be grateful if you could clarify which statement is correct.

Nick Stewart: My experience of shows in Edinburgh and Glasgow is that attendances are good, but, as far as GMVs across the whole of the UK are concerned, I think that sales might be down in certain areas. As I have said, live music keeps expanding, and things are getting tougher for GMVs. One big factor is that so many more people are going to festivals now, although, sadly, a couple of festivals in Scotland have collapsed over the past few months. In 1970 or thereabouts, there were about 150 live music festivals in the UK; in 2010, there were 1,000 and, in 2019, there are 3,000. Since 2010, therefore, there has been a threefold increase, and the number is now unsustainable. That is having a lot of impact on GMVs, too.

Live music is continuing to grow. You have some figures for attendance at venues—I believe that attendance at live music events in the UK is generally very good, but things are still hard for GMVs.

Stuart McMillan: It is obviously good that people are going to watch and listen to live music, but is there a feeling in the music industry that they are doing so because they are being fed a diet of big stars every day by radio and television

and that they are not getting an opportunity to listen to new, up-and-coming singers and bands?

Nick Stewart: There is more diversity of listening now than there has ever been, and I think streaming has enabled that. There is also a real diversity of media outlets where people can get music, and the rate of discovery, as platforms such as Spotify describe it, seems to be increasing. That does not necessarily mean that there are more professionals; indeed, I think that the hurdles that people have to get over before they can call themselves a professional musician are much more difficult. In my part of the contemporary sphere, someone would need to be touring venues with a capacity of, say, 800 to 1,000 in the UK and Europe before they could say that their main income came from being a musician. My answer, then, would be no, I do not think that it is a case of the big headline artists getting all of pie—although they clearly get a lot of it.

That said, the industry is beginning to understand that it should be giving something back to the smaller venues for the development role that they play; indeed, that is where the Music Venue Trust pipeline investment fund comes in. Looking at the continent, I know that in France, for example, there is a 3 per cent tax on all tickets for grass-roots music. The UK industry might, at some stage, agree to a small tax in order to pay the venues back, and there have been small commitments from some of the ticketing companies, but the record labels are still keeping away from the matter and the major promoters are not very interested. However, in other European countries, there are agreements under which they have to do these things, and they have been fairly willing to do them. We will see what happens.

Stuart McMillan: That leads me into another area of questioning. In your submission, you quote a comment from Steve Lamacq that I genuinely find interesting. Notwithstanding what you just said, does the industry put anything back in? You are here today to highlight the issue of the public money that is received through Creative Scotland, but does the industry invest at all?

Nick Stewart: There is a request that the industry do much more on that. At times, and in some ways philanthropically, the industry chooses to fund music education and such things, but it is really small beans compared to the bigger picture. As I said, the UK music industry was worth £4.4 billion last year, yet a lot of venues cannot afford to fix the locks on their toilet doors due to the lack of capacity and time for staff to fix things properly.

Kenneth Gibson: Thank you for your excellent written submissions.

Nick Stewart has talked about the grants that will be provided in England, and you are suggesting that we provide something similar here. In the area of your submission where you define what a grass-roots music venue is, you talk about

"Stage monitors, lighting rig, drum kit, back line, stage microphones, stage box & snake, spare instruments, instrument consumables, signal processors, recording rig"

and so on. Alexander Stewart knows a lot more about such things than the rest of us. Is that the kind of stuff that it would be really good to get a grant for? For example, if a fund was set up in Scotland, grass-roots venues could bid to replace specific bits of equipment. You talk in your submission about a lot of analogue equipment still being used in venues and about some of the equipment not being as environmentally good as it should be. Is it that level of infrastructure that you are thinking about?

Nick Stewart: Yes, it is that type of infrastructure. In your papers, you have the details of the sound and vision project. If an award proportional to the English award was available in Scotland, we could do exactly that. The project is for 100 venues around the UK, which would include 9.6—roughly speaking, 10—venues in Scotland. Upgrading the infrastructure in 10 venues, to start with, could make a huge difference. When you invest in the infrastructure in that way, you massively improve the audience experience by making the live music more attractive, but it also frees up the venues to spend any leftover sums on audience development and talent development programmes or to give better fees to touring artists.

Venues are very efficient at spending money. They spend what they can, and they almost always spend all their money. Venues spend 130 per cent of ticket income on artist fees and putting on the shows—I think that you have that figure somewhere—so they are already running at a loss, which they subsidise from alcohol sales. When alcohol sales start to disappear—I believe that there was a news story yesterday that said that alcohol sales in Scotland last year were at an historic low—it will not be sustainable for us to continue to operate those pubs to put on bands.

Where we can improve the quality of the experience, we will continue to develop audiences for the next generation of musicians who are coming through in Scotland.

Kenneth Gibson: I had a debate on the issue yesterday. The figures show that the reduction tends to be in the consumption of high-strength, low-cost alcohol, which we are trying to reduce because of its social and economic impact.

Nick Stewart: The great reports on youth trends that we have had from Eventbrite and others over the past few years have definitely shown a reduction in the consumption of alcohol by young people, including those who go out to music venues. More specifically, people who go to music venues drink less than people who go to pubs for a drink—they typically have just one or two beers, so the spend per head is much lower. As I often say, running a music venue is a crap way to run a pub, and putting on live music is a crap way to increase the value of a pub.

Kenneth Gibson: Let us go back to equipment. If a venue was investing in a piece of equipment that cost £5,000, would you envisage the venue putting up, say, 20 per cent and the rest being provided by a grant? Do you see there being some kind of balance rather than an outright grant for a piece of equipment? Anybody who was providing funding would want the venue to show the determination to invest in its own business. How would you see the grant working?

Nick Stewart: It could work on any one of those models. As you will notice in the details of the sound and vision project, the point is—ideally—to get money from Governments to unlock funding that we already have, because there is matched funding available now. Some of that comes from the public address system and lighting companies, which, for them, is partly about building longer-term relationships.

Kenneth Gibson: There are nine members on this committee—two are unable to be here today, for various reasons—but none of us represents Glasgow or Edinburgh. However, I notice that 27 of the 47 venues in the Scottish music venues alliance are in Glasgow and Edinburgh, which have 20 per cent of the Scottish population. We have real concerns about how Creative Scotland and other organisations are spreading their funding. For example, I represent North Ayrshire, and the per capita spend is 25 times higher in Glasgow than it is in North Ayrshire.

There will always be more venues in cities because there are more people to go to them, but is there an opportunity to invest some of the resources in venues outside the big cities? How do we stimulate the growth of venues in other parts of Scotland? I know that Sneaky Pete's is in Edinburgh.

Nick Stewart: The Music Venue Trust is all for maintaining whatever network of smaller music venues we have outside the bigger cities, including those that are most at risk. In the current situation, we are facing rent hikes. For instance, the landlord of Sneaky Pete's is trying to increase our rent by 45 per cent. Two years ago, our rates went up by 50 per cent.

If you are outside the city and have a smaller audience to play to, such financial concerns will be much more extreme. It is not for me to divide the pie, but, if one of those areas lost a venue at this time, I do not know what kind of person would then choose to open an almost certainly loss-making live music venue under those circumstances. We need to maintain before we grow.

If you think that more money should be given to venues in such areas, I would say that the venues that most need it deserve it.

Kenneth Gibson: Consolidation is vital. I do not think that we will ever see the return of Flicks in Brechin, right enough.

David Laing obviously has real issues with diversity. There is an issue around geographic diversity; perhaps you would like to comment on that. How can we deliver that diversity? Diversity comes in many ways. We talk about ableism and racism. We see that some of the high arts companies in Scotland are extremely diverse if we look at where the artists come from. Artists at Scottish Ballet or Scottish Opera come from dozens of different countries. How can we improve the situation?

David Laing: A range of approaches is required. I will talk specifically—

Kenneth Gibson: I am sorry to interrupt, but I would like to add just one thing. How do we encourage people from deprived backgrounds in Scotland to think that they can have a future with some of those companies?

David Laing: I will try to pick up on those questions and add a little bit to the answers to previous questions, because I believe that they are related.

On geographic spread, I believe that strong local arts venues—I include small music venues in that—have a range of benefits at various levels within their local city area and that they can offer the same benefit as an access point and as part of a strong network with other areas that are currently underserved.

The venues that Glasgow Life operates on behalf of the city are to an extent part of a national and international network. They are open and willing to work in a way that helps to transfer some of the value and benefits that come from our work, and they co-ordinate both ways with venues in smaller towns and cities around the country.

Nick Stewart was asked earlier about specific funds. There is a really strong case for specific funds—maybe with a slightly different focus from what Nick Stewart talked about, although I also support that—being available for venues of all kinds, but particularly smaller ones that tend not to have the resources to do this internally, to make

improvements to their physical and non-physical structures and processes in order to address inequality of access.

11:00

That can involve many things, including signage that is suitable for people with visual impairments; British Sign Language interpretation being much more universally provided for the deaf; ramps and lifts; changing places and standard toilet facilities; supported attendances; and different programming at different times so that people who are neurodiverse can enjoy and engage with art forms more than they do at present.

Smaller organisations and venues lack the resources to spend that money, but it seems to me to be really important that it is somehow found, because those barriers are very real ones that act to exclude large groups of people from accessing the arts, and providing those things is one way in which we can improve diversity.

The other thing to bear in mind is that that applies equally to audiences and to performers or artists. There are challenges for performers or artists even in some venues that are accessible to audiences. We are still a long way off appropriate facilities being universally provided back of house for performers or artists who are disabled or have other challenges that require support. The same applies to space to make and develop work. All of that acts to filter out and exclude certain people from participating fully and gaining the benefits that the arts have to offer.

Alexander Stewart: Glasgow Life's written submission talks about the short-termism of Creative Scotland, with its three-year cycle, and it says:

"There are still perceptions of bias towards Edinburgh-based, and National institutions and Companies".

We have discussed the funding process that we find ourselves with. What should the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland do differently to better support the creative industries? We heard from the previous panel that things as basic as a lack of public transport can prevent people from being able to support a group, an organisation or an institution, because they cannot even travel there. That is even before we consider affordability.

You have highlighted today some interesting and important aspects of what is wrong. What should the Scottish Government and Creative Scotland do differently to try to manage the situation?

David Laing: The written evidence that Glasgow Life submitted is a collation of the views that we hear as much as it represents our view. I do not think that I disagree with anything in it, but it attempts to represent the views of the sector that we engage and work with. The sector is diverse and in some ways it can speak for itself.

We welcome the huge efforts that Creative Scotland is making to review how it works. There seems to be a really deep and meaningful process of review, and we have had opportunities to feed into it, which we have welcomed and been grateful for. We are confident that that may lead to an optimisation of how Creative Scotland works. It is a hugely important body and it functions well in many ways. However, it is correct to say that, when we ask people any question to do with the culture sector, it will be the problems that we hear about more than anything else. That is worth noting.

There is some scope for looking at how the national body works with city and local authority partners over the long term. There is a network of venues, although some are under threat, as Nick Stewart has pointed out. The network is fragile in some places, but it exists and it can be strengthened.

There will always be a case for some short-term funding, because it can be appropriate for different types of projects and programmes, but there may be some merit in considering the idea that there should be a key series of partnerships with a geographical spread, with anchor points in significant locally based organisations that could work with a national body to each do what is most appropriate. Whether or not that funding could cascade in a slightly different way is worthy of consideration.

Alexander Stewart: We have touched on the idea of partnership collaboration. There are capacity workers in culture in some locations, and there are arts officers to try to support the mechanism to ensure engagement. That approach has worked really well in some locations but, in other locations, such work is completely non-existent, so we cannot make direct comparisons. What should we do to ensure that we get that benefit from them all?

David Laing: I am focused on Glasgow, so I am not necessarily best qualified to give you an answer about the national picture. However, I can say that, in many cases, the local authority resource is under pressure for various reasons, so the number of local arts officers who perform that function may have been reduced and the officers may be very stretched. You are right that there is an issue around ensuring that there is adequate capacity that is provided on a fair and equitable basis across the country so that citizens everywhere can tap into those benefits and participate. The co-ordination of provision and a national strategic view are functions that national

bodies and the Government can carry out really well. Some aspects of delivery and connection are, in turn, best carried out at the local level.

Alexander Stewart: What are Nick Stewart's views on what should change at the Government level on the cultural side of things to try to support what he is trying to achieve?

Nick Stewart: On local authorities talking to grass-roots music venues, there are currently almost no conversations in Scotland along those lines. If there are funds, it would be great to see some kind of outreach to the venues and to see how those conversations could start. If such funds have been created and you are in a city such as Edinburgh, which has 20 or so GMVs—fewer than that, recently—it does not take much for the appropriate person to pick up the phone, start the conversation and bring people in so that they can see whether they are using their funds to target exactly what the funds were invented for.

Alexander Stewart: There is a knock-on benefit for all of you if that dialogue happens. Cultural tourism can expand across many sectors. There is the opportunity to develop and expand but, if no conversation is taking place or if there is no dialogue, that creates a real difficulty.

Nick Stewart: I completely agree. There is a movement towards music cities. That is a bit of a UK thing, but it is international, as well—some of that work has been done in Berlin, for instance. The idea is that cities should take pride in the amount of music provision that they have. However, there must be conversations between local authorities and music groups to develop that.

In Edinburgh, we have a group, which is currently slightly dormant, that was set up to try to fix some licensing issues that we had relating to the inaudibility clause. I do not know whether members are aware of the inaudibility campaign, which I partly ran.

It would be great to have much more conversation in Scottish cities between councils and those involved in music provision. I believe that that relationship is increasingly strong in Glasgow.

Alexander Stewart: Is it strong in Glasgow, David?

David Laing: I am sorry—I was making notes about something else, so I am not sure exactly what you are asking about.

Nick Stewart: I know that Susan Aitken, for instance, is very much in favour of Glasgow being a music city. She supports Glasgow's status as a United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization city of culture.

David Laing: That is right. That leads on to a wider point that I would like to make on what could be done or thought of differently.

It absolutely needs to be recognised that arts funding is not just about funding the arts. What we get back for that funding is much more significant, and one of the most important factors is the economic impact. Cultural tourism—specifically that based on contemporary visual art and music—is a key driver in Glasgow's economic planning for the next few years. Glasgow is a UNESCO city of music and, some would say, the unofficial European capital of live music. The suggestion that people come to the city because of its cultural scene—and, in large part, its music scene—seems to hold true, and that could be developed further. That is also an official part of the city's tourism and economic development plan.

Seeing the arts, music and other aspects of culture in their most diverse and vibrant forms as factors that play a huge part in other outcomes is another idea that could be thought of differently, to everyone's benefit. Tourism and the direct effect on the economy is certainly one issue; other issues are health and wellbeing, quality of life in older age, attainment in young people, educational benefits, and overcoming disadvantages that some of our young people—and people at all life stages—face.

There is an increasingly strong body of evidence that shows the benefits of participating in or being in the audience for art forms. Those benefits can range from increasing language learning, emotional regulation and other types of learning in primary-school-age young people to proven benefits in the reduction of anxiety and the need for medication for people who experience dementia in later life, depression or dependence recovery. Significant reports point out such benefits.

In 2017, the all-party parliamentary group on arts, health and wellbeing published its review of the benefits of culture and art forms for prescription and so on. That is quite a good summary of the state of the current evidence.

In the past month, we have seen a powerful study that analysed 10 years' worth of data on museum visits. The simple benefits to people of getting out of the house and going and doing something or interacting with some people were controlled for, and it was found that cultural engagement specifically had additional benefits over and above those simple factors. The study covered all forms of cultural engagement, but it centred on museum data. I found it fascinating that the only case for which its finding was not true was cinema. The working theory for that seems to be that screen-based, passive forms of cultural engagement are not as effective as any live form.

I do not know whether such a shift is possible but, across the country, and in each city in it, arts, culture and cultural engagement in its various forms could be seen as a huge part of the answer to the health and social issues that citizens face, which most people want to address. Obviously, Glasgow has some challenges in that area. Thinking of funding for that in the same way as—or in a similar or a related way to—how we think of education or health funding has a great deal of merit, and Glasgow Life is actively exploring that.

The Convener: We have gone over our time, but I see that Nick Stewart wants to come back in. Would you like to make one last point, Nick?

Nick Stewart: Yes. It relates to what has just been said.

The reasons that David Laing has just expounded are the same reasons for cultural events being part of the national performance framework. The relevant indicators are:

"Attendance at cultural events or places of culture"

and

"Participation in a cultural activity".

Obviously, we want to get all musicians and artists—not just professionals but those who are amateurs or just keen—taking part. Other indicators are:

"Growth in the cultural economy",

which we have discussed, and

"People working in arts and culture".

Grass-roots music venues are already very good at achieving those aims. Like many other sets of organisations, we have done so thus far without subsidy. However, as I have said, now is the time for GMVs to ensure that they continue to provide such activities, which filter into the national performance framework. There will be less from GMVs soon if the right funding is not put in place.

The Convener: We have definitely got that message today. I thank both witnesses for coming to give evidence and for their very helpful written submissions.

Before the meeting moves into private session, I put on the record that Jamie Greene has submitted his apologies today.

11:15

Meeting continued in private until 11:21.

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