

RESTRUCTURING - REALLOCATION OF FUNDING & DEVELOPMENT BUDGETS; Note of a meeting on Friday 3 November 1989

Those present: Ian Christie, Barrie Ellis-Jones, Colin MacCabe, Irene Whitehead and Michael Prescott.

1. The purpose of the meeting was to consider the reallocation of the present Funding & Development budgets that is necessary as a result of the proposed restructuring. The relevant budgets are those for the Regional Arts Associations, Direct Grants, Development and Training.

2. It was agreed that the aim should be to concentrate on the cultural aims and objectives which underlay this part of the restructuring, and not get too bogged down in consideration of the figures themselves. Actual reassignment of the budgets to the other Divisions concerned should be fairly straight forward once the general policy aims and objectives had been established. There was also a need to resolve matters quickly - both for policy reasons (including the need to tell outsiders where matters now stood) and for purposes of preparing revised budgets for 1990/91.

Regional Arts Association

[1989/90 Budget; £1,465,000. Block grants to RAA's on a three-year funding basis, for revenue expenditure only. A 2% (nominal) increase has been planned for 1990/91. The longer term aim is to reduce this kind of support, and to divert money released to the Development budget.]

3. It was agreed that this budget should continue to lodge in the Planning Unit with the Directorate. However, Research and Distribution Divisions would increasingly both have an interest in the way that these resources were used, and there would therefore need to be improved consultation and co-ordination between all three Divisions.

Direct Grants

[1989/90 Budget; £973,000. Block grants (mostly annually funded) towards revenue expenditure made directly to various organisations including the 15 RFT's, Production Workshops, various national organisations, Festivals, etc.]

4. It was agreed that the relevant elements in this budget that were directly attributable to distribution/exhibition activities (about 66% of the total) and to production activities (about 24%) should be reassigned to Distribution and Production Divisions respectively. There was also some expenditure (10% of the budget) that could not be directly attributed to either of these - eg, funding for national organisations - and it was agreed that these should be considered case by case.

5. Specifically, therefore, the allocation in this budget for current revenue funding of all RFT's and Media Centres, and Festivals, should be transferred to Distribution Division. Similarly, Production Division would take over that part of the budget relating to direct support and payments for production activities.

6. It was noted, however, that the current support for production activities consisted of revenue funding to the London production groups, and that this was currently the subject of detailed negotiations with the GLA, LBGS, ACGB, etc. It was agreed that it was important to avoid entering into any further commitments that were, or might be, incompatible with Production Divisions' own policies and priorities concerning future use of these resources. It was agreed that, to prevent this, a small steering group for these negotiations was necessary, comprising representatives of the Divisions concerned, and that Irene Whitehead should convene this group.

Development

[1989/90 Budget; £279,000. Used mainly as capital expenditure support for new developments, but also for some running-cost support where linked to incentive funding. Two recent examples: a £150,000 grant over three years to the Nottingham Media Centre towards capital costs; and small, c£6000, grants designed to help establish video engineering training courses for women.]

7. It was agreed that this budget should be administered by the Planning Unit. This was consistent with the need for a budget which was separate from other Divisional budgets, and which had sufficient flexibility to allow changes in the size and direction of allocations in line with changing Institute-wide priorities.

Training

[1989/90 budget: £24,000 plus new Training Officer. Money used for a variety of services, and with some forward commitments. Includes £8000 from Channel 4 for training regional administrators.]

8. It was agreed that this budget should remain with the Planning Unit for the time being, but on the understanding that this was without prejudice to decisions about the eventual location of the budget and the uses to which it might be put.

9. It was agreed that, because a number of Divisions would have an interests in the uses and development of this budget (including Central Services if it was also be to used to provide internal staff training), it was necessary to determine the future priorities and policies for the budget as soon as possible. To this end, it was agreed that a small working group, chaired by Manuel Alvarado, should be set up to consider the policies for the budget and future priorities for the Training Officer. It was also agreed that Colin MacCabe and Ian Christie should start talking to the Training Officer about the kind of developments and initiatives they had in mind concerning the post and the training budget.

Michael Prescott
Assistant Director

MP/FR/000381

A/8

cc: Those present
Wilf Stevenson/Director
Chet Shukri/Finance
Ted MacDonald/Finance