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Irene Whitehead,
Head of Planning, BFI
Ian Christie,
Head of Exhibition & Distribution, BFI

14 Great Peter Street
London SW1P 3NQ
Telephone
071-333 0100
Facsimile
071-973 6590
Minicom System
071-973 6564

Chairman
The Lord Palumbo
Secretary-General
Anthony Everitt

THE ARTS COUNCIL OF GREAT BRITAIN

Dear Irene and Ian,

cc RW

I gather that the restructuring currently going on inside the BFI may have some implications for the current status of the London Film-makers Co-op. May I chuck in my two pence worth - just in case it's helpful. (I'm aware that I can only see the tip of the iceberg here, so bin this if its irrelevant to the present context. Also, I've made suggestions along these lines to both of you in the past, so what I'm offering is hardly new).

- 1 The many similarities between the Co-op and LVA suggests that they ought to be handled by the same funding agency/agencies
- 2 Given that they will (?) end up occupying the same building, the longer term objective must be to enable them to rationalise their working methods in order to be able to take advantage of possible economies; eg by combining their distribution activities, and jointly curating their exhibition programme. (this underlines point 1)
- 3 Both LVA and the Co-op contain a mix of national and regional functions. Their workshops have a significance primarily as regional resources, and their funding needs ought to be considered in the context of provision in London generally. Their distribution work is undoubtedly national/international in significance, and its funding need ought to be assessed in comparison with that of other national agencies. Similarly, their exhibition services, which it has to be admitted exist currently more as potential than fact, but which in the new building may become the most important part of the complex, ought to be assessed along side other centres of excellence in the exhibition area, such as the flagship RFTs (albeit that the programme will be very different).

Therefore, I would suggest that if you are considering delegating the Co-op to

the LFVDA, you should do so only partially, and in the context of reclaiming part of LFVDA's funding of LVA. ie:

delegate the Co-op's workshops to LFVDA
leave LVA's workshops with LFVDA
retain the Co-op's distribution and exhibition
reclaim LVA's distribution from LFVDA

I'm aware that the financial implications of the split I'm suggesting may present the Co-op with some initial difficulty, my impression being that they are unused to being that specific about what gets spent where. But the establishment of cost centres etc is a valuable exercise, and one from which LVA benefitted enormously when the new regime took over from Doug Foot, (Irene's and our Incentive Funding Unit's sanctions having finally worked!).

Finally, if, (and only if), retaining LVA/Co-op exhib/dist presents you with some difficulty, I'd hesitantly suggest that you might consider passing those bits of the organisation to us, (perhaps as a joint client?). In this scenario, they would be joining the rag bag of exhibition clients we currently have, such as the Umbrella, Moviola, ICA Touring, and of course LVA marketing, so we'd have some basis for assessment comparisons. I personally have no desire to acquire more clients of any sort - they are nothing but a headache - but I do think the national status of LVA/Co-op is an important issue. One possible advantage to them of a move to the AC would be the possibility of access to other AC sources of funding for capital and other needs.

Good luck with your restructuring; and best for 93 generally

Yours sincerely

David Curtis
Film & Video Officer
071 973 6457