

CONFIDENTIAL

Minutes of the Policy Meeting of the Artists' Film and Video Committee held on Monday, 11 April 1983, at 10.30 am at 105 Piccadilly, London W1.

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Present:	Al Rees	Chairman
	Roger Wilson	
	Anne Rees-Mogg	
	David Critchley	
	Mary-Pat Leece	
	Rodney Wilson	Film Officer
	David Curtis	Assistant Film Officer
	Anna Kruger	Assistant Subsidy Officer
	Patricia Anderson	Secretary

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- 1 Apologies for absence were received from John Bradshaw and Joanna Drew. Stuart Marshall and Sue Barrowclough were absent.
- 2 Financial Statement for 1982/83 (Appendix 1)  
The Assistant Subsidy Officer reported to Committee that this year's figures had balanced accurately, showing a net overspending of about £300 on a budget of £95000.
- 3 Film-Makers and Video Artists on Tour
  - 3.1 The Film Officer pointed out that although the list of bookings presented (Append 2) did provide information on how the scheme had operated over the last year, it would be useful for Committee to know whether or not the scheme was expanding or contracting and what the relationship was between the film bookings and the video bookings.  
  
IT WAS AGREED that figures for the last three years would be produced.
  - 3.2 Extension of Touring Scheme to include RAAs  
The Film Officer reported that sadly, due to the inability of the RAA Film Officers to arrive at an agreed view of the scheme, it had been rejected. Although the BFI had agreed to cover the publishing costs of the scheme it had not been acceptable to the Film Officers. Committee thought that the scheme might still be possible if it were properly discussed by the affected constituency within each RAA. The Film Officer reported that the RAA Directors had themselves suggested a review of the situation. The Assistant Film Officer reported that there was now a reciprocal agreement with the WAC; any activity under the scheme occurring in Wales, would be paid for by the Welsh Arts Council and any activity occurring in England would be paid for by the ACGB irrespective of whether the artist was Welsh or English.

IT WAS AGREED that the Film Officer should relay the Committee's disappointment to the RAAs, and ask for the following information; why was the scheme rejected; was the proposal discussed with film and video-makers in their constituency and if so what was the response. And, finally what suggestions do they have for modifications to the scheme to make it acceptable.

3.3 Rates (Append 3)

Committee discussed the figures attached in Appendix 3, in which the Assistant Film Officer proposed that the basic fee paid to artists hiring their own or others' work in conjunction with an appearance should be increased from £15 to £20.

IT WAS AGREED the maximum rate should be increased from £15 to £20. Regarding basic fees, the Assistant Film Officer pointed out that these were regularly reviewed. Some Committee members felt that the fees were low and did not encourage activity in this area. This was disputed by the Chairman and the Assistant Film Officer. It was decided however that an increase in general fees was inadvisable as all other areas of Committee activity were contracting. In addition, Committee felt that it should strive to keep costs to venues as low as possible, and this would be difficult if artists' fees were increased.

IT WAS AGREED that basic fees should remain the same.

There was a discussion on motor mileage rates but

IT WAS AGREED to defer consideration until the Arts Council's rate for staff was known.

4 Reference Collection

The Film Officer explained that the purchase of work funded by the Committee had been taken up as a result of supplementary funds being made available by Council, with the provision that the money should be committed before March 31. There were obvious planning problems attendant on receiving funds at short notice but the opportunity had been provided to catch up on the reference collection of funded work. The purchase of a copy of work produced with funds from the Arts Council was a condition of grant which had not been taken up for some time because of lack of funds. He saw the collection as an essential record of the use of public funds. Appendix 4 represents a combination of the material purchased from this extra money plus material the Film Office has had in its possession since the early 70s, before the Committee was set up. Anne Rees-Mogg thought that the list was partial and disappointing, and was not fully representative of the work Committee had funded. The Assistant Film Officer reported to Committee that doubts had been expressed within the constituency regarding the effect of this collection on the operation of distributors. The Film Officer said that due to its hasty preparation, the list was to some extent limited and was not to be taken as final. It was pointed out by the Assistant Film Officer that some of the 'imbalance' was due to the lack of response from film/video artists, and the decision not to request very recent work. The existence of the collection would not adversely affect distributors; restrictions on its use were clearly stated in the letters sent to each artist and the works would not be distributed or exhibited, but be used for

research only. Any interest in the work resulting from this research would be referred directly to the artist or the distributor. The Film Officer pointed out that Committee would have to decide whether or not it wished to expand the collection, in which case money would have to be set aside for purchasing.

The Chairman concluded that when being forced to combine several systems, inconsistencies were inevitable; the Council's right to buy at cost a print of each film it funds was mandatory and clearly stated in each offer letter. However there was a need to discuss further the status of the collection.

#### 5 Video Access Libraries

Committee was generally enthusiastic regarding the information received from the Arnolfini. (Append 5).

The Assistant Subsidy Officer pointed out that none of the money allocated for purchasing had been claimed during the last financial year, and thought it must be made clear to the Arnolfini that it was becoming increasingly difficult for money to be carried forward.

IT WAS AGREED that in future a more accurate purchasing application would be required and a time limit put on expenditure. The Assistant Film Officer thought that any tardiness by the Arnolfini regarding this matter was due to staffing problems which were now being remedied.

#### 6 London Video Arts

6.2 Committee discussed the financial report on LVA prepared by the Assistant Subsidy Officer, before proceeding with the paper (6.1) submitted by LVA, deferred from the last meeting. The Assistant Subsidy Officer concluded that LVA was growing stronger with each injection of capital and had doubled its turn-over for each of the last three years. Regarding payment of workers, David Critchley reported that LVA had three part-time and one full-time worker based on a salary of £6000 per year. The capital from Channel 4, £24000 had been secured, equipment having been bought and installed in Wardour St. Additionally, GLAA had agreed to pay £790 to run two advanced workshops over 2 weekends as a pilot scheme.

The Chairman asked if there was a case for the Arts Council changing its relationship with LVA; making them a revenue funded client. The Film Officer pointed out that at the present time the Arts Council was more in favour of shedding clients than gaining them. However as a revenue client, LVA would be in a more protected position and there was a good argument to support the suggestion.

The Assistant Film Officer asked David Critchley whether he thought that LVA's funding from Channel 4 and GLC represented the emergence of a different emphasis in LVA's priorities. David Critchley considered that LVA was attempting to maintain a position of independence, and wished to earn in revenue what it received in grants and thus allowing involvement in a variety of activities.

The Film Officer pointed out that in the past Committee had suggested to LVA that they seek money from other sources, and Committee had, if by implication only, given their support to these activities. Any change noted in LVA's policy was not necessarily self-initiated. When asked by the Chairman whether in his opinion, the discussion paper represented a revenue

application, so changing the basis of funding, he replied he thought not. Unless Committee indicated the possibility of another arrangement, LVA would continue to follow past practice.

There followed discussion about LVA's financial commitments, particularly to the Air Gallery.

David Critchley said that LVA needed a larger space in central London and he thought that this was a viable proposition; the cost of new premises would differ little from the overall costs of LVA's present commitments, and would enable LVA's present activities to be developed.

At this point David Critchley left the room.

Committee discussed further the possibility of LVA becoming a revenue client. The Assistant Film Officer, although confident that LVA's activities fell within the terms of reference of the Committee, said that Committee should point out clearly what it would take responsibility for. Initiatives resulting from GLC/GLAA/Channel 4 funding could not be Arts Council responsibility if further funding from these sources was not forthcoming. Unless the future of the other sources of funding were guaranteed, he felt it unwise for LVA to take on additional commitments.

The Film Officer pointed out that up to date LVA funding by the ACGB had been project-based and was therefore adjustable. If LVA were accepted as a revenue client, it would be a more permanent commitment. Committee therefore needed a much more precise report from LVA about its intended future policy. The Chairman was less enthusiastic, pointing out that if LVA became a revenue client, it would lose its present autonomy, and could become too greatly influenced by the Committee which he did not think was particularly desirable.

However the Committee was impressed by LVA's current activities and encouraged by its future plans and agreed to explore without prejudice to existing arrangements, the implications of revenue funding. As there could be no change in LVA's relationship with ACGB this financial year, it was agreed that LVA representatives and one or two Committee members meet during the year to discuss the matter and present a more detailed case for consideration in September.

David Critchley returned and was informed of Committee's decision. Roger Wilson offered his services for this meeting.

## 7 Future Policy (Append 8)

The Assistant Film Officer briefly outlined his paper, reminding Committee that the paper represented a mixture of long term proposals which assumed a growth of money, admittedly not to be expected in the near future, but which he thought needed discussion now, plus matters resulting from current discussions needing immediate solutions.

### 1 Production Awards and Bursaries

1.1/2 Waging: Committee's feelings were mixed. Anne Rees-Mogg said that Committee's present financial position would not permit an increase in funding for more substantial productions. Also it would not necessarily ensure work produced was of a higher standard, and would effectively deny funding to younger and more inexperienced film-makers, especially those leaving college. She thought it was particularly important in building up the constituency. Mary-Pat Leece said that waging should be thought about in a

creative way to find a method of providing a fee or hiring expenses. Roger Wilson suggested that Committee offer a fixed number of larger bursaries to allow for waging of crew etc. Committee would then no longer feel any obligation to reduce the budgets of the larger applications it received. However the Film Officer pointed out that there had been little response within the category of large awards and bursaries which were already on offer.

The Chairman suggested that the solution might be for Committee to change its guidelines to artists.

IT WAS AGREED that a new section be inserted in the guidelines, to the effect that wages for crewing could be considered but were not a guaranteed part of any award or bursary offered. An argument should be made for crewing in the application.

2 Purchase of Work

- 2.1/3 Feelings were mixed, concern being expressed on the details of putting these proposals into practice. The Assistant Film Officer pointed out that these proposals were not intended to replace existing methods of supporting artists, but were to operate side by side. Roger Wilson said that greater weight should be given to supporting material in assessing applications and current procedures needed to be reconsidered.  
IT WAS AGREED that greater priority be given to support material, the method to be decided at a later date.

3 Return of Work

- 3.1 Committee thought that there were too many problems attached to 3.1 and 3.2. The Chairman pointed out that access libraries might feel less obligated to intelligently research and explore the constituency as a prelude to purchasing work if they had the easy option of applying for work through the ACGB Reference Collection.  
IT WAS AGREED not to pursue this idea.

4 Distribution

- 4.2 Committee agreed that devolution of the distribution award scheme for video to LVA might be appropriate in the event of their being revenue funded.
- 4.3 Committee was sympathetic to the proposal to admit film to video transfer for VHS/U-Matic distribution, to the scheme.  
IT WAS AGREED that the application form would be adjusted and each application would be judged on its merits.
- 4.4 Improvements to LFMCo-op Distribution Service  
There was some sympathy for this proposal.  
IT WAS AGREED that the Assistant Film Officer explore this, and Committee await response from the Co-op.
- 4.5 Lower 'repeat' booking fees at the Co-op  
There was sympathy for this proposal and as the Arts Council was a major booker it was felt that it should be explored.  
IT WAS AGREED that ACGB officers draft a letter to the Co-op to this effect.
- 4.6 Print/Tape availability  
There was general assent to this proposal.  
AGREED

5 Exhibition

- 5.1 The objective of establishing a repertory of artists' film and video in London was agreed although the most appropriate context remained a matter for debate.  
AGREED
- 5.2 The urgent need for the reinstatement of Committee's exhibition allocation was unanimously agreed.  
AGREED
- 5.3 The Chairman introduced the exhibition advisory group's recommendations and referred Committee to the contents of the animateur's report, which had been circulated. Anne Rees-Mogg pointed out that the FM/VAoT list (Append 2), included several new venues, indicating that there were new audiences for whom packaging might prove useful.
- 5.4/8 Committee discussed the proposed setting-up of an 'umbrella' scheme, similar to the scheme supported by the ACGB Dance Dept. This was to replace the Modular Scheme which the Film Officer thought failed to fulfill its original purpose, although some very interesting, personal programmes had been launched. There were very mixed views. David Critchley was particularly concerned that if such a scheme were to be set up, it should reflect the existing activities of distributors and venues. Roger Wilson hoped that it would not be merely a smooth curatorial exercise but an exciting event. The Chairman pointed out that there was a definite need for direction or 'targeting' in the area of programming. The Film Officer pointed out that more comparative information on potential audiences and costs was needed. IT WAS AGREED that the Assistant Film Officer produce a financially more detailed proposal for the 'umbrella' scheme for the meeting on April 18.

6 Animateur

- 6.1/2/3 There was general discussion on the future of the animateurship and the reappointment of Simon Field. It was agreed that the post had been extremely useful, but Anne Rees-Mogg suggested a new person be appointed in order to inject some fresh ideas. David Critchley wanted to record his concern for a second person to be appointed, to deal specifically with video. He had no strong objection to Simon Field's continuation in the area of film. There was some discussion on the actual procedure of selecting the animateur. It was felt by Committee that the choice would necessarily be limited due to the nature of the animateur's responsibilities, and advertising would be a waste of funds. However there should be a choice. IT WAS AGREED to extend the post of animateurship for another year. The Film Officer thought that other candidates should be considered and pointed out that as Committee had to await Simon Field's report, it had time to consider more fully at a later date. IT WAS AGREED to consider whether to re-appoint Simon Field at a later date, with particular attention being paid to the possibility of an 'umbrella' scheme.

7 Access Libraries

- 7.1 Committee decided to continue to support the expansion of a network of video access libraries, in conjunction with Arts Films.  
AGREED

- 7.2 There was no support for this proposal, at the present time. (3.1).
- 7.3 (2.3) Anne Rees-Mogg restated her wish to see additional work purchased to rectify the imbalance in the collection. The Film Officer emphasised the need for a collection of work, representing Committee's expenditure, not necessarily the constituency's best work. IT WAS AGREED that the Assistant Film Officer explore the possibility of purchase as a means of funding work (2.1) and explore the possibility of including additional material, not funded by the Arts Council and not covered by the purchase scheme. (eg foreign work, and work by deceased film-makers).
- 7.4 IT WAS AGREED that additional sources of work for access libraries should not preclude applications from the libraries for their own purchase funds.
- 7.5 IT WAS AGREED that Committee should consider purchase of work from abroad to supplement these collections.
- 7.6 IT WAS AGREED that some of these purchases of work from abroad could be used to make good the gaps in the major distributor's collections. Funds for this purpose to be sought in 84-85.

9 Any Other Business

AOB was discussed at this point as Mary-Pat Leece had to leave. Mary-Pat Leece said, that whilst supporting the appointment of David Parsons, she thought there was a need to make a policy decision on the ratio of men and women on the Committee. She asked Committee to appoint two more women. The Film Officer pointed out that 8 people was the maximum number allowed on the Committee by Council, and that decisions about whom to appoint were finally Council's. There was general agreement that an equal number of men and women being elected to Committee was desirable. IT WAS AGREED that a 50/50 ratio be adhered to when selecting men and women for Committee and the present imbalance would be made up in the future.

8 Division of Allocation

The Film Officer reported that there had been no real change in the division of allocation from 1982/83. It was as follows:

£10000 for touring schemes  
£15000 for placement bursaries  
£33000 for exhibition/capital  
£33000 for production  
£4000 for distribution

The Chairman commented that although as a Sub-Committee, the allocation was generous, the allocation was inadequate to meet the needs of the constituency and suggested that Committee make a strong case for an increase to be submitted to Council later in the year.

IT WAS AGREED that the officers would produce a draft for later Committee consideration.

Volunteers were requested for distribution meetings, to be decided on April 18.

The meeting ended at 5.50 pm.