

Public Services Reform (Scotland) Bill – Creative Scotland

The Scottish Library and Information Council (SLIC) and CILIP in Scotland (CILIPS) welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation. SLIC is the advisory body to Government and its organisational members for all library services in Scotland and CILIPS is the professional body for individual members and those working in the library and information sector.

- SLIC and CILIPS welcome the intention for a more accountable, effective and responsive body for arts and culture. Creative Scotland is responsible for “promoting understanding appreciation and enjoyment” and “encouraging as many people as possible to access and participate”, however there needs to be close working with other agencies and local authorities to enable it to deliver its functions effectively. Creative Scotland must recognise the role and range of cultural provision which others, in particular local authorities, deliver.
- Creative Scotland will not represent the whole cultural sector yet still appears to have an overarching cultural advisory role with no clarification as to its relationship with existing independent advisory bodies, such as Museums and Galleries Scotland and SLIC. There is no formal structure for Creative Scotland to work with them. This could be addressed by the creation of a National Cultural Forum, which draws its membership from the range of stakeholders, advisory agencies, NDPBs and local authorities. This Forum would give local authorities a role in cultural policy development and could provide a mechanism for advocating and supporting culture within the community planning process.
- Creative Scotland has a significant funding role through its own and lottery funds. SLIC and CILIPS are concerned that the focus of funding has largely focused on the individual creator and that it does not support sustained national and local delivery programmes which are “encouraging participation in art and culture”. Reading has the largest cultural audience and SLIC would welcome a more enabling approach by Creative Scotland to balance the needs of readers in relation to those of the creator. It is not clear in the Bill how Creative Scotland will work with others to ensure that reading is sustained and promoted. SLIC and CILIPS have worked with the Literature Forum since its inception and we believe that this brings together relevant parties with considerable experience to support reading for all. SLIC and CILIPS believe that more structured and sustained support is required from Creative Scotland to ensure that reading strengthens literacy and creative writing.

SLIC and CILIPS are of the view that a suitable phrase should be included in Schedule 5 to ensure that Creative Scotland works in partnership with other cultural agencies with specific sectoral expertise and responsibility.

Scottish Library and Information Council
CILIP in Scotland
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