

Chapman, Angela (DPC)

From: Cheltenham EO <Cheltenham@parliament.sa.gov.au>
Sent: Monday, 21 July 2014 10:16 AM
To: DPC:PCU
Subject: FW: Adelaide College of the Arts - Response to Reform of SA Govt Boards and Committees
Attachments: Letter to Premier Weatherill from Robyn Archer 18.7.14.docx
Importance: High

Dear PCU.

Please find attached correspondence for the Premier's Office

Kind Regards,

Joshua Hage
Trainee to **Jay Weatherill MP**
Member for Cheltenham
Premier of South Australia

Received:	22.7.2014
Physical ID	PREM14003702
File No	PREM14/0049
Action Officer	MART-DIRECT
Draft Due	
Previous Copies	

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From: Janice Cain [<mailto:Janice.Cain@tafesa.edu.au>]
Sent: Monday, 21 July 2014 10:12 AM
To: Cheltenham EO
Cc: 'Robyn Archer' [REDACTED]
Subject: Adelaide College of the Arts - Response to Reform of SA Govt Boards and Committees
Importance: High

Good Morning,

As per correspondence dated 8th July 2014 regarding Minister Weatherill's decision to reform South Australian Government Boards and Committees - please find attached response from Robyn Archer (Chair of the Adelaide College of the Arts Advisory Committee).

Unfortunately Robyn is in Glasgow and has sent this correspondence via email and as such has no signature attached.

If you require clarification on any point contained herein please contact Robyn directly via email on [REDACTED]

Please confirm receipt of this correspondence.

Thank you.

Kind Regards,
Janice

Janice Cain

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18th July 2014

Dear Premier,

I am writing in response to your communication re the abolition of Boards and Committees in South Australia. At the outset I should say that it's good to see the government looking seriously at this aspect of its advisory and governance arrangements. Especially in the Arts, we are always concerned about the kind of expenditure which might be better spent on art and artists, rather than on administration, and so this is a welcome review. I write in this instance with specific reference to the Arts Advisory Committee of the Adelaide College of the Arts.

This committee began its life as an Arts Advisory Board following the appointment of Christie Anthony as Creative Director of the College. The creation of that position and the Advisory Board came as a result of the recommendations I made in my 2009 Report on the College. With the creation of the TAFE SA Board, the Arts Advisory Board became a committee. Following Christie Anthony's resignation, the role she had been fulfilling was modified, and demoted in the TAFE staffing hierarchy.

While Jane MacFarlane has been appointed to the new role, is enjoying her work at ACArts, and doing a very good job specifically related to marketing and partnerships, I have been concerned about the current state of play at ACArts, and the ongoing role of the Arts Advisory Committee. Your communication offers the opportunity to outline these concerns.

As a Board, our role grew in support of the Creative Director, who, together with us, was pursuing the creation of a nationally competitive Centre of Excellence in arts training. Her energy and hard work saw many changes, and many positive initiatives, not least of which has been the ground-breaking articulation with Flinders University. But the demotion of the role and the economic rationale of one TAFE mean that the dreams of a Centre of Excellence have all but vanished. Despite the continuing excellent work of the staff, and an equally impressive record of achievement by its graduates, ACArts seems almost to be back to where it was when I made the Report. In addition, we have learned of the intention to make severe cuts to Skills for All funding next year, and that what remains is unlikely to be directed to arts students.

I find this disappointing for a city and state which boasts creativity and predicates a significant part of its budget on the success of arts festivals. It appears that our arguments about the supply and demand chain for the arts has fallen on deaf ears. Our festivals are still *importing* skilled arts labour while, as in any other industry, the state should be increasing support for arts training – especially those behind the scenes – to supply that growing demand. I am advised that as of 2015, it will cost a student \$29,000 to get a diploma in stage management. This is unrealistic, and there will almost definitely be a downturn in enrolments, the consequence of which will likely be cancellation of that and perhaps other back-of-house certificates, which in turn threatens the wider ecology of ACArts -the only institution to offer such training in South Australia.

Since its inception, the members of the Board/Committee have offered invaluable advice and industry connections to Christie Anthoney, Sean Parsonage and now Jane. This group of arts professionals constitutes one of the finest groups of advisors I have had the privilege of working with anywhere in Australia. But given the current lack of support for creative leadership for the College, the impending doom of increased fees and decreasing funded hours, and a perplexing lack of communication back from the Chair of TAFE SA over the past two years, I feel that the advice and expertise the members offer can probably be pursued in a form other than the currently legless Committee entity. Given the generosity of the members, and the invaluable practical and philosophical assistance they have given the College thus far, I suspect they would all be more than willing to be called upon on an ad hoc basis by the staff of ACArts. I believe they can continue to create invaluable pathways for staff and students to the heart of the industries they represent – in film, literature, visual arts, performance, business, architecture and arts management.

The members of the Committee responded to a draft of this letter and are generally, if for some, reluctantly, in agreement: but two comments are worth noting. One noted “the value - in the arts - of having formally selected and appointed teams of recognized peers: people who are knowledgeable and connected, experienced practicing professionals who, in a select analytical, advisory and strategic capacity identify issues, generate ideas and propose strategies? Retaining expertise is important.” Pertinent to this was the very helpful suggestion of Annette Hurley, the TAFE SA Board representative on the Committee, who has suggested the following : “if the Advisory Committee goes, I would like to see some structure put in place that would be able to retain firstly some formal industry connection with AC Arts and secondly a strong voice within the general TAFE structure to support the AC Arts model. The industry connection could perhaps be a group that is supported by AC Arts and acts as a kind of Trust or ‘Friends Of’.

On the general proposition of the abolition of Boards and Committees, I make the following observation. These entities may not offer the most economically efficient way of giving advice either to institutions or direct to government, but the problems will not be solved by technology alone.

I would hope there is not a blanket fantasy that skyping or video-conferencing offers a 100% substitute for person-to-person interaction. In a well-chaired Board or Committee room, the regular meeting of minds and a richness of dialogue and shared expertise is precious, and priceless. This is something I will miss. While digital meetings work for some purposes, decision-making in the digital age often becomes two-dimensional, and often lacks the subtle nuances of human interaction. I sincerely hope that the latter are properly valued and retained where the decisions made will affect, as in the arts, the lives of hundreds of thousands of South Australians.

Yours sincerely,

Robyn Archer AO

Chair, Arts Advisory Committee, Adelaide College of the Arts

Strategic Advisor, Arts and Culture, Gold Coast

Artistic Director, The Light in Winter (Federation Square, Melbourne)

Deputy Chair, Australia Council

Member, Council for Australia Latin America Relations

Member, European House of Culture

PREM14D03702



Hon Jay Weatherill MP
Premier of South Australia

Ms Robyn Archer AO
Chair – Arts Advisory Committee
Adelaide College of Arts
39 Leigh Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Ms Archer

Thank you for your letter of 18 July 2014 to the Premier of South Australia, the Hon Jay Weatherill MP, about the abolition of Boards and Committees.

Your letter has been sent to the Minister for the Arts, the Hon Jack Snelling MP, as this matter falls within his portfolio responsibility.

Should you have any queries about your letter, please contact the Minister's office on telephone 8463 6270.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Jay Weatherill', written over a horizontal line.

**Premier's Correspondence Unit
Office of the Premier**

22 July 2014

cc: Office of the Hon Jack Snelling MP, Minister for the Arts