

## EXTRACT OF LETTER

Rùnaire a' Chaibineit airson Cultar, An Roinn Eòrpa agus Cùisean an taobh a-muigh

Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Europe and External Affairs

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Your ref/Ur faidhle: SMcC/sc  
Our ref/Ar faidhle: 2015/0003972  
28<sup>th</sup> January 2015

Dear Stephen

### The Beacon Arts Centre Greenock

I am writing now to formally respond to Inverclyde Council's request for central government support for The Beacon. We spoke on the telephone on 18 December and our officials have been in regular contact since then to identify the best and most appropriate way for us to support you in ensuring that The Beacon is able to continue as a growing and emerging nationally important centre for the arts.

When we spoke we discussed how Creative Scotland would be the key central agency in supporting the Greenock Guild to restructure and work on the business plan for the Beacon. I am pleased that they have been active in giving that support and advice and that it has been appreciated by the Council and Guild.

I am told that the Guild has now agreed to change its constitution and prepared an ambitious business plan. Creative Scotland also tell me that the Beacon is acting as a catalyst for the creative industries in the local authority area, with a significant increase in applications for support to Creative Scotland received since it opened, and increased artistic activity generally in the area.

I understand that the local authority is now looking to put in greater revenue support to the Beacon in order to support the business plan, and that the costs of the landscaping work will be met by your regeneration body, but that this leaves a continuing shortfall of £600,000. Unfortunately, Creative Scotland do not have any capital funds available at present, and it is unlikely that they would be able to accept an application for capital support for a number of years as the current set of projects complete.

However, as we discussed, I am able, exceptionally, to commit the Scottish Government to support the Beacon spread over the next three years as your officers have suggested. That

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support would be £100,000 this financial year, followed by £500,000 before 31 March 2017.

The details of this grant can be worked out by our officials but would include: the Government receiving a proportionate share of any monies recovered through legal action ; and a willingness by the Beacon to strengthen the relationship between the Beacon and our national performing companies. On that latter point, I am pleased that the National Theatre of Scotland production of 'Yer Granny!' with Gregor Fisher will be having its premiere at the Beacon in May.

This grant will be in addition to the Regular Funding revenue support from Creative Scotland and the aim is to ensure that The Beacon, supported by a partnership of public bodies, is able to build upon its initial successes and continue to grow, supporting not just culture and jobs in Greenock, but forming a key part of our national cultural infrastructure.

**Fiona Hyslop**