

8th July 2021

Ref: SO390 PAC33

Éilís Fallon
Committee Secretariat
Committee of Public Accounts
Leinster House Dublin 2
D02 XR20

CC: Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media

Dear Ms. Fallon,

Thank you for your letter of the 26th May 2021, in relation to Mr Kennedy's concerns. We appreciate the important work of the Committee of Public Accounts and confirm Screen Ireland's commitment to perform our remit in accordance with the Code of Practice for Governance of State Bodies at all times.

We can assure the Committee that Board Members at all times act in good faith and in the interests of the agency. The Board has robust conflict of interest procedures in place which are detailed in Screen Ireland's code of conduct (copy enclosed) but in summary:

1. Declaration of conflicts of interest are an agenda item at each Board Meeting.
2. A register of all Board Members' interests is maintained by the Board Secretary. This register is updated regularly for any new conflicts which may arise subsequent to appointment.
3. In cases of potential conflict of interest, Board Members do not receive any documentation or otherwise participate or attend deliberations regarding these transactions.
4. A schedule of transactions in which a Board Member had an interest are disclosed in Screen Ireland's annual report to ensure transparency.
5. Each Board Member completes an annual Statement of Interest for return to the Standards in Public Office Commission detailing any relevant interests in accordance with the Ethics in Public Office Acts 1995 and 2001.

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An Príomhfheidhmeannach /
Chief Executive
Désirée Finnegan
Comhaltai / Board Members
Susan Bergin
(Cathaoirleach/Chair)
Dr. Zálle Asava, John McDonnell,
Ray Harman, Eoin Holohan,
Marian Quinn, Kate McColgan.

6. All Board Members have received corporate governance training from an independent provider as part of their induction process and conflicts of interest is an important element of this training.

It is essential for Screen Ireland to have a board comprised of a blend of industry and non-industry professionals to ensure the Board has the necessary skills and experience to provide strategic leadership and direction, governance and oversight. It is inevitable however that members of the Board will from time to time apply for funding which is why our corporate governance procedures are so important.


The latest Board was appointed in May 2021 following an open competition operated by the Public Appointment Service which invited individuals with professional industry experience, creative and technical experience, experience of distribution, exhibition and audience development, experience of related areas including the creative arts including crafts, or broader business experience. This mix of skills is an ideal composition to ensure the Board is capable of supporting the audio-visual sector at this crucial time.

In relation to Mr Kennedy's other comments regarding his interaction with Screen Ireland, with the additional challenges presented by the pandemic the Production and Development Unit receive a significant volume of communications. Unfortunately due to the high volume of submissions it is not always possible for the team to meet with all potential applicants prior to application.

However, we can assure you that we will contact Mr Kennedy directly and arrange a further telephone conversation with our Production and Development Unit to advise him on our production funding application process in more detail. We can also assure the Committee that we deal with all applicants in a fair, transparent and professional manner in accordance with our published Customer Service Charter.

Sincere thanks for your time and consideration and please contact us if there is any other information we can provide to the Committee.

Yours Sincerely,



Chief Executive Officer, Désirée Finnegan



Chair, Susan Bergin