

FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 11 July 2025. Minute of Meeting of the FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor McLellan, Convener; and Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost (as substitute for Councillor Yuill, the Vice Convener) and Councillors Boulton (as substitute for Councillor Farquhar), Brooks, Cooke, Grant (as substitute for Councillor Watson), Greig, Henrickson (as substitute for Councillor Allard) and Tissera (as substitute for Councillor Malik).

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be found [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

1. Members were requested to intimate any declarations of interest or transparency statements in respect of the items on today's agenda, thereafter the following was intimated:-

- (1) Councillor Greig advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 2.1 (Notice of Motion by Councillor Boulton - Castlegate Arts) by virtue of him being a Council appointed member to the Aberdeen Performing Arts Board and a Trustee of Great Western Community Trust. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting;
- (2) Councillor Henrickson advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 2.1 (Notice of Motion by Councillor Boulton - Castlegate Arts) by virtue of him being a Council appointed member to the Aberdeen Performing Arts Board. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting; and
- (3) Councillor Grant advised that he had a connection in relation to agenda item 2.1 (Notice of Motion by Councillor Boulton - Castlegate Arts) by virtue of him being an employee of Aberdeen Inspired. Having applied the objective test, he did not consider that he had an interest and would not be withdrawing from the meeting.

NOTICE OF MOTION BY COUNCILLOR BOULTON - CASTLEGATE ARTS - REFERRED FROM COUNCIL ON 2 JULY 2025

2. The Committee had before it an Urgent Notice of Motion by Councillor Boulton in the following terms:-

- (1) Instruct the Chief Officer - City Development and Regeneration to continue to provide support to Castlegate Arts to help them to achieve the cultural investment framework requirements and meet the Council's criteria for Following the Public Pound, and provide them with a monthly funding stream up to an annual amount in 2025/26 of £100k, to be taken from the General Fund Contingencies budget;
- (2) Note that an offer of a long-term lease remains available to Castlegate Arts on current terms;

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- (3) Instruct the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to instruct and update the building condition survey (previous version has been shared with Castlegate Arts) and make these costs available to Elected Members to assist budget setting process for 2026/27. The General Fund Contingencies budget will provide funding of up to £15k to secure any specialist or other works required in completing the survey work; and
- (4) Agree that the above measures are needed to ensure that the charity Castlegate Arts can continue its good work in the city for a wide range of our citizens.

Councillor Boulton moved her motion and explained the rationale behind it and was seconded by Councillor Brooks.

Councillor Grant, seconded by Councillor Tissera, moved as an amendment:-
that the Committee:-

- (1) Agree the Lord Provost determined that Councillor Boulton's notice of motion was urgent on 16th April 2025, the fact that it is being heard 86 days after it was deemed urgent confirms the contempt in which the SNP hold opposition members with and the contempt they hold Standing Orders too;
- (2) Agree the grassroots support from the Arts Community to save Aberdeen Arts Centre is simply overwhelming;
- (3) Agree the campaign to Save Aberdeen Arts Centre has already received backing from a host of famous faces including actors Laura Main, Amy Lennox and Brian Cox; Hollywood director Jon S Baird; magician Barry Jones; and virtuoso percussionist Dame Evelyn Glennie;
- (4) Agree Aberdeen Arts Centre is an independent arts venue, operated by a registered charity (Castlegate Arts Ltd) in the heart of Aberdeen. For over 60 years, it has played a crucial role in the north east's vibrant arts scene through its programme of performances, Creative Learning Programme for children and adults, and an Artist Development Programme to support local professional creatives;
- (5) Agree the SNP Administration has deliberately ignored requests from Castlegate Arts Ltd to help support it, despite previous administrations understanding the need to support the Arts in this city;
- (6) Notes that the Council agreed to provide £8,000 in rent from the Common Good fund to Castlegate Arts Ltd to cover the said rent for the Aberdeen Arts Centre, despite according to the Administration, that Castlegate Arts Ltd currently does not comply with following the public pound regulations; and
- (7) Agree to provide a grant of £100,000 for this year and the two subsequent budgets subject to Council budget approval to be taken this year from Contingencies budget and the following years from the Common Good Budget.

Councillor Greig, seconded by the Convener, moved as a further amendment:-
that the Committee:-

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- (1) Note the Liberal Democrat and SNP Partnership is committed to the long term future of the Arts Centre as a cultural venue in Aberdeen which is currently leased and operated by Castlegate Arts Ltd;
- (2) Note Castlegate Arts Ltd continue to not comply with the '*Code of Guidance On Funding External Bodies and Following the Public Pound*' published by the Accounts Commission and Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (CoSLA);
- (3) Note that Aberdeen City Council awarded £1.45 million to cultural organisations across the city through the Cultural Investment Framework 2025/26;
- (4) Note the Chief Officer - City Development and Regeneration, through the External Funding Teams, continues to provide support to any organisation interested in accessing funding;
- (5) Note the £8,000 annual rent of Aberdeen Arts Centre is currently funded by the Common Good Fund;
- (6) Instruct the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to continue to offer a new lease to Castlegate Arts reflecting the current lease conditions, for a term to be agreed; and
- (7) Note Aberdeen City Council has carried out initial works to the clock tower (which is excluded from the lease) funded through the Repairs and Maintenance budget;

In terms of Standing Order 29.20, a vote was taken between the two amendments.

On a division, there voted:- for the amendment by Councillor Grant (4) – Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Grant and Tissera; for the amendment by Councillor Greig (5) – the Convener and Councillors Cooke, Greig, Henrickson and the Lord Provost.

Following which, the amendment by Councillor Greig was put to the vote against the motion by Councillor Boulton.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion by Councillor Boulton (4) – Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Grant and Tissera; for the amendment by Councillor Greig (5) – the Convener and Councillors Cooke, Greig, Henrickson and the Lord Provost.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to adopt the amendment by Councillor Greig; and
 - (ii) to note that the Executive Director of City Regeneration and Environment would liaise with the Chief Officer – Corporate Landlord to circulate further details to members in relation to (1) the Council's lease arrangement with Castlegate Arts Ltd, specifically regarding repairs; and (2) the amount of grant funding community centres receive on an annual basis.
- **COUNCILLOR ALEXANDER MCLELLAN, Convener**

In terms of Standing Order 32.8, Councillors Boulton, Brooks, Grant and Tissera intimated their dissent against the foregoing decision.