

Huw Lewis AC / AM
Y Gweinidog Tai, Adfywio a Threftadaeth
Minister for Housing, Regeneration and Heritage



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

Eich cyf/Your ref P-03-317
Ein cyf/Our ref HL/05331/11

William Powell AM
Chair Petitions committee

committeebusiness@Wales.gsi.gov.uk

19 July 2011

Dear William

Petition P-03-317 Hijinx Theatre funding

Thank you for your letter of 29 June regarding the petition in respect of Hijinx Theatre and their funding from the Arts Council of Wales (ACW).

I have read your letter and the accompanying enclosures carefully, and I am familiar with the Investment Review conducted last year by ACW.

As you are aware, the strategic agenda for the arts in Wales is determined by the Welsh Government in consultation with the Arts Council of Wales, while individual funding decisions are solely the responsibility of ACW, who operate at arms-length from Government.

As Minister, I uphold the established principle of arms-length funding of the arts in Wales, a principle that enjoys cross-party support within the National Assembly for Wales. Therefore, while I am sympathetic to the position of Hijinx and other arts organisations that have had their funding either reduced or cut altogether, I do not feel it would be appropriate to comment on, or intervene in individual funding decisions taken by ACW. I would like to draw your attention to the fact that Hijinx have been successful in attracting £70,000 in grants, supplementary to their core revenue funding, from ACW this year. This means that, overall, Hijinx have been allocated £230,000 for 2011-12, which is very slightly less than their revenue funding for 2010-11 (£234,448). The company can take pride in having secured this funding, which recognises their valued work with learning disabled people.

I do not intend asking ACW to reconsider their funding decision in this case.

ACW have given a commitment to monitoring the impact of decisions taken within the Investment Review in the next few years in order to ensure their strategic priorities are being met. I intend to keep a close eye on the situation myself so I can ensure the Welsh Government's key aims of widening access and breaking down barriers to participation in the arts for the people of Wales is achieved.

In the meantime, I would encourage Hijinx to continue to work closely with ACW to develop a sustainable business model for the business and to maximise accessibility to any available funding streams.

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