**Northern Ireland Screen Commission**

**Annual Report and Financial Statements**

**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

**Company Information**

**Directors**

The directors who served during the year and up to the date of signing the financial statements are the Board members as follows;

Sir David Sterling

Fionnuala Deane

Richard Hanna

Susan Picken

Mark Huffam

Brenda Romero

Róise Ní Bhaoill

Michael Fanning

Carmel Mullan

Peter Weil

Tom Gray

\*Greg Maguire served from 01st April 2023 and resigned 30th June 2023.

**Company Secretary**

Richard Williams

Company Number NI 031997

Organisation Status Northern Ireland Screen is a limited company by guarantee and was classified by ONS as a Non-Departmental Public Body in January 2012 as per the Public Sector Classification Guide and the National

Accounts Classification Decisions reports on the ONS website.

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Auditor Comptroller and Auditor General

Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO)

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**Strategic Report**

**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

**Overview**

**History and statutory background**

Northern Ireland Screen Commission (trading as Northern Ireland Screen) was established on 28 April 1997 as a direct result of recommendations made in the Edmund Review, which was commissioned by the Department of Education for Northern Ireland (DENI) and the Department of Economic Development (DED).  It assumed the previous responsibilities of the Northern Ireland Film Council.

At the Statement of Financial Position date, the Department for the Economy (DfE) is the Government Sponsor Department for Northern Ireland Screen. The primary funders are DfE, the Department for Communities (DfC), the British Film Institute (BFI), as a conduit for the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS), Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media (TCAGSM) and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, as a Lottery distributor. The framework for these governance and funding arrangements is contained in the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum dated 21 May 2019.

Northern Ireland Screen is a company limited by guarantee, governed by a Board of 10/11 Directors and employing 45 permanent and approx. 150 temporary staff. The organisation is the government-sponsored lead body in Northern Ireland for the film, television and digital content industry.

This report covers the second year of Northern Ireland Screen’s four year strategy, *Stories, Skills and Sustainability* *2022-2026.*

**Review of business with Key Performance Indicators**

Northern Ireland Screen is committed to maximising the economic, cultural and educational value of the screen industry for the benefit of Northern Ireland.  This goal is pursued through our mission to accelerate the development of a dynamic and sustainable screen industry and culture in Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland Screen has 3 overarching objectives:

1. That Northern Ireland will have the strongest screen industry outside of London in the UK and Ireland;

1. That this industry will be supported by vibrant and diverse cultural voices that are recognised and celebrated equally at home and abroad; and

1. That the sector will be underpinned by the most successful screen and digital technologies education provision in Europe ensuring that the education is within reach and of value to the most socially disadvantaged.

*Stories, Skills and Sustainability 2022-2026 (the ‘Strategy’)* was developed in line with DfE’s previous 10X Strategy with considerable focus on innovation, social inclusion and sustainability.  While the Strategy was developed before the setting out of DfE’s Ministerial Priorities, there is strong alignment between the Ministerial Priorities of Good Jobs, Improving Productivity, Regional Balance & Decarbonisation.

For example;

* *Good Jobs*:  Screen Sector jobs are generally higher paid than average and are much sought after, while all new entrants supported by Northern Ireland Screen are paid the Real Living Wage;
* *Improving Productivity*: the development of Studio Ulster as a centre of excellence for virtual production is seeking to harness new technology to improve productivity; and
* *Regional Balance*: A considerable focus is placed on growing Derry-Londonderry as a screen cluster with companies there supported by Northern Ireland Screen both attracting considerable inward investment and exporting globally.

Going Concern

DfE Northern Ireland Screen sponsor department have confirmed the 2024-25 budget position.  Planned Screen Fund and Skills activities for 2024-25 have been formulated in line with the funding levels in the economic appraisal.  The agreed future financing of any Northern Ireland Screen liabilities is expected to be met by DfE.

It is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the financial statements as the DfE, sponsor department of Northern Ireland Screen, is supply financed. There is no reason to believe that the Department’s future sponsorship and future Assembly approval will not be forthcoming to meet Northern Ireland Screen’s liabilities as they fall due.

Performance Analysis

The purpose of the performance analysis is to provide an overview of our performance against targets set by the Board and how it has been delivered within the resources given to us.

**Financial performance and position**

***Statement of Financial Position***

Total current assets have increased by £0.327m from £1.525m at 31 March 2023 to £1.852m at 31 March 2024.

The Statement of Financial Position shows an increase in Total Taxpayers’ Equity of £0.570m moving from a surplus of £0.156m to a surplus of £0.726m.

***Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure***

Total comprehensive income/expenditure has increased moving from a deficit of £0.576m at 31 March 23 to a surplus of £0.570m.

The total income for the year increased by £4.021m from £26.356m in 2022-23 to £30.377m in 2023-24, mainly as a result of the following movements;

Income;

* DfE income increased by £3.231m from £16.292m in 2022-23 to £19.523m in 2023-24.
* Recoupment in relation to Screen Fund projects had increased by £0.509m from £0.466m in 2022-23 to £0.975m in 2023-24.
* CINES program was in full operation in 2023-24 with an income of £1.816m an increase of £1.212m from 2022-23 where income was £0.604m.
* BFI Skills Cluster new program was in operation in 2023-24 with income of £0.238m.
* The USBF program had utilised all deferred income and reverted back to historic baseline which was a reduction in income of £0.808m from 2022-23 to 2023-24.

Expenditure;

* Salary costs within Northern Ireland Screen increased by £1.391m. This was primarily due to additional new posts created in 2023-24 for the CINES/Skills programs and an accrual for the pay award for core staff, which included a £1.5k non consolidated payment for eligible staff not paid in 2022-23.

All other expenditure and programme expenditure remained in line with previous years spend.

**Aims, Objectives and Future Plans**

Northern Ireland Screen sets out its annual objectives within a Business Plan that contains targets for the various activities of the organisation. Performance against targets is measured continuously throughout the financial year, in formal end of quarter reports reviewed by the Senior Management Team, by the Northern Ireland Screen Board and by our sponsor department, the Department for the Economy.

At the half-way mark of the Strategy, Northern Ireland Screen is projecting a direct spend return of £269.3 million, which represents 62.5% of the full 4-year strategy target of £431 million.

This is an extremely positive interim report given that the period has included an extended global shutdown of the screen industry due to strikes in the USA related to writers and actors.

The sectoral approach at the heart of the Strategy played strong dividends during the strike period as    Animation, Independent Film, Television Drama, Factual and Entertainment Television, Gaming, Irish Language and Ulster-Scots continued largely unimpacted while Large Scale Production was completely closed-down for more than 6 months. TV Drama performed particularly strongly.

Northern Ireland Screen will continue to deliver the Strategy for a further 2 years to March 2026 and, as stated, will continue to increase the focus on sustainability/decarbonisation.

The Phase 2 extension of Belfast Harbour Studios is almost complete and will come online in the summer of 2024, while Studio Ulster, housed within Phase 2 of Belfast Harbour Studios, will come online within the financial year 2024-25.  Studio Ulster represents a very significant infrastructural investment in the screen industry that should improve productivity and assist in the decarbonisation.

**Key Highlights**

Large-Scale

Netflix’s mid-air action comedy, ***Lift*** starring Kevin Hart was released on Netflix in January and quickly made its way to number one on the Netflix global top ten. Directed by F. Gary Gray ***Lift***filmed in Harbour Studios and on location across Northern Ireland in 2022.

Universal’s ***How to Train Your Dragon***, a live-action feature adaptation of the 2010 animation of the same name, began filming in Northern Ireland in early 2024 following a challenging hiatus due to the WGA and SAG strikes.

TV Drama

Lisa McGee’s ***Derry Girls*** kept the awards rolling in winning the Comedy Award at the International Emmys. Throughout the year the hit sitcom also picked up three British Academy of Film and Television Arts (BAFTA) Awards (Best Scripted Comedy, Best Writer Comedy and Best Female Performance in a Comedy), two RTS Awards (Best Scripted Comedy and Best Writer Comedy), an Irish Film and Television Awards (IFTA) (Best Script Drama), and was named Edinburgh TV Festival’s Best Comedy Series.

Despite a downturn in advertising revenue impacting TV Drama commissioning, the TV Drama sector continues to go from strength to strength and employment figures for NI resident crew averages around 90% of the total crew with NI based Heads of Department (HOD) regularly hitting over 70% of the total HOD staffing count, with the remaining 30% being Non-NI based HODs.

Audiences were treated to the first series of ***Blue Lights*** at the end of March 2023.  The critics were unanimous in their praise for the series which was created by Declan Lawn, Adam Patterson and Louise Gallagher and produced by Stephen Wright. The BBC commissioned a 2nd series before the first series finished airing.  Series 2 filmed in Autumn 2023 with the first 3 episodes directed by Adam and Declan.  In an almost unprecedented move BBC Drama commissioned two more series of the drama before series 2 broadcast.

***Hope Street*** returned to Donaghadee to film a third series which subsequently aired on BBC NI, BBC One as well as Britbox in the US.  A 4th series was commissioned at the start of 2024 and will shoot in the spring.

***The Woman In The Wall*** from Motive pictures wrapped in early 2023 and broadcast on BBC1 in the Autumn.  ***Breathtaking***, the Covid drama produced by NI’s Brian Falconer from HTM and ITV shot in April 2023 / May 2023 and broadcast in early 2024.

World Productions, the company behind the Line of Duty series, shot the second series of their critically acclaimed courtroom drama ***Show Trial*** in Northern Ireland in November 2023.

The third series of Channel 5 drama ***Dalgliesh***began filming in February. Local producer Leon Fee stepped up from her producing role on ***Hope Street t***o take the producing reins this series.  Company Pictures brought the

first series of Channel 5 police procedural ***Ellis*** to Northern Ireland in February with NI’s Chris Martin producing.

Having aired on BBC Three and on iPlayer, ***Wreck*** was commissioned for a 2nd series with Chris Baugh returning to direct and executive produce and local man Brendan Mullin producing this series.  The second series will broadcast in April 2024.

Children’s/Animation

The Northern Ireland animation sector remained strong throughout the year with many of the companies

securing commissions and producing international content including Paper Owl Films who are in production on ***LÍ Ban*** and ***Nikhil and Jay*** and secured a third series commission for ***Pablo***. Jam Media have also secured a CBeebies commission for ***Beddybyes*** and service work on ***Tim Rex*** for Nickelodeon.

Newly based Belfast company HaZimation started production on their animated feature, ***Mutant Year Zero,*** which is based on a video game of the same name and utilises the Unreal Engine to build the environments and assets.

Sixteen South’s ***Odo*** claimed two awards at 2024 British Animation Awards - Best Children's Pre-School Series and Best Design. Series 1 is currently broadcasting on Channel 5’s Milkshake and Series 2 is in production.

***Isadora Moon*** broadcast on Sky Kids to strong audience figures. The 2D-animated series is based on the best-selling Isadora Moon books by Harriet Muncaster and was produced by Kelebek Media alongside NI’s own Jam Media.

ALT Animation’s ***Captain Onion’s Buoyant Academy for Wayward Youth*** was selected as one of three projects by BBC Children’s to secure a commission as part of the broadcaster’s inaugural Ignite programme.

Two BBC children’s drama were filmed over the Summer and will be broadcast later in 2024 – ***Pickle Storm*** and the award winning ***A Kind of Spark Series 2***. Both ***Silverpoint*** and ***Nova Jones*** enjoyed second series broadcast on CBBC.

Independent Film

The documentary sector continued to make waves during 2023 with Kathryn Ferguson’s ***Nothing Compares*** picking up the Rose d’Or Award for Arts. The film also won the George Morrison Feature Documentary Award at IFTA. Kathryn was named as part of BAFTA’s 2023 Breakthrough cohort. ***Nothing Compares*** was broadcast on Sky Documentaries in July, just days after the sad passing of Sinead O’Connor.

Alison Millar’s ***Lyra*** won Best Single Documentary at the Grierson Trust’s 2023 British Documentary Awards and Best European TV Documentary at the Prix Europa Awards as well as Best Documentary at the Broadcast Awards. Northern Ireland Screen partnered with Hidden Light, Channel 4 and Erica Starling on a special event on Lyra’s legacy and the Good Friday generation. The event, marking the 25th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, saw Hillary Clinton in conversation with Alison Millar and Monica McWilliams.

2023 was an exceptional year for Independent film. Productions include Sundance award winning ***Kneecap*** which was picked up by Sony and has been gaining rave reviews. It will open Cinemas in UK/Ireland in August

2024 and is also headlining Sundance London. The New Talent Focus films that we supported ***THE WISE GUY*** and ***Housejackers*** which have both just wrapped post-production. ***Dead Man's Money***, second feature by writer/director Paul Kennedy is completing post and is very promising. The Morrigan Colum Eastwood’s second feature is also in post-production. Martin Brennan produced two feature films back-to-back, The Old Guy and Sunrise, both are completing post.

***The Land of Saints and Sinners*** by local writer Mark McNally and director Terry Loane was supported through development and opened at Venice film festival and opens in cinemas in April 2024. While ***The Last Rifleman*** was IFTA nominated and is now available on Sky TV. ***The Heist Before Christma***s also launch on SKY TV on Christmas Eve 2023.

The Lie of the Land opened at Galway Film Flead and won the audience award and continues the festival circuit now. While T***he Glenarma Tapes*** continues to get great reviews.

Factual Entertainment

Alleycats TV, DoubleBand Films, Stellify Media, Walk on Air Films and Below the Radar Ltd were all selected to be part of the BBC Hot House initiative which saw several commissions secured across a range of genre for BBC network including a 15eps daytime series ***Anna Haugh: No Taste Like Home,  Communion Stories*** a 1 x 60” documentary for BBC Religion and ***Art Game*** a 6 x 60” competition format.

Afro-Mic Productions, one of the UKs fastest growing indies based in Belfast had a fantastic year securing ‘Small Indie of The Year’ at the 2023 Edinburgh Television Awards.  The company continues to grow with commissions secured with a range of broadcasters including Channel4, Paramount+ and UKTV.

***Hunting My Catfish Crime Gang*** from Strident Media saw James Blake saw exposed the dark and utterly heartless modern-day crime wave where ruthless organised gangs are using the very latest technology to prey on our age-old desire for love, companionship and success, all to scam blameless victims out of money.

2024 will see the projects resulting from the More 4 NI Initiative air: ***Country House Auction*** (Big Mountain) and ***Tiny Islands*** (Tern TV).

At the 2023 Belfast Media Festival Northern Ireland Screen were pleased to announce a development partnership with Disney+ and a call for female skewing projects was launched.  The shortlisting process has now concluded, and the shortlisted project is about to commence development with the intention for a commission later in 2024.

Nice One productions and Potato TV returned with ***Finish Line Series 2,*** action-packed quiz fun for a BBC Network with Roman Kemp and Sarah Greene where the more you know, the further you go. Knowledge equals speed as contestants battle it out to reach the finish line first.

Interactive

Support for Hypixel, part of Riot Games, in Derry continues and is of particular importance in an industry sector which is seeing a contraction in global workforce numbers throughout 23-24 but with the support of Northern Ireland Screen Hypixel is taking on two new Quality Assurance trainees in Derry for a period of at least 12 months. This support given to AAA games companies so as not reduce staffing in Northern Ireland specifically is one of the key areas that makes the games sector in Northern Ireland very attractive.

Billy Goat are about to launch their game “Parcel Corps” with publisher Secret Mode at Gamescom 2024 in Cologne in August. Billy Goat will be doing a preview of the game at the Northern Ireland Screen London Showcase at BAFTA in April to select industry professionals.

On the back of the success of the TV show “Fast and Farmersish”, Alley Cats are producing a prototype companion game to the show to take to Marché International des Programmes (MIP) as well as showcase at games industry events as an example of cross sector content creation leveraging existing media intellectual property in new markets. This prototype has been produced by one of the Pixel Mills success stories Holomoon who are a small agile group of developers.

Passion Pictures, an OSCAR and BAFTA award winning animation house, is looking for and engaging in coproduction talks with games companies here in Northern Ireland around existing media IP as well as other cross sector opportunities.

IndieDev 2024 was launched in May 2024 and is a pilot programme managed by Ardán and IMIRT on behalf of Northern Ireland Screen and Screen Ireland. It is aimed at supporting indie video game developers based in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland with The Pixel Mill being a hub of support and mentorship.

The Pixel Mill has managed to attract at least one cross border games development title from a Dublin based games company Outlier Games who are doing a prototype for a “Mars Attacks” game to be showcased at Gamescom 2024 to publishers.

Italic Pig are taking their “Paleo Pines” successful game and putting it into a virtual reality environment with a working title “Paleo Pines: Silver Islet” and will be getting further support on this from Northern Ireland Screen throughout 2024.

Another existing familiar children’s animation IP is in discussion with Northern Ireland Screen about a potential young children’s interactive games based on the Nintendo Switch which would allow guided gameplay with an adult.

Four development teams in the Platform incubator program at the Pixel Mill successfully delivered their vertical slices as did four teams in the Minigame program. These programs will be run again out of the Pixel Mill.

Developer delegations attended major games conferences throughout the year, e.g. Gamescom and Develop, and will be selecting and sending suitable delegations again throughout 2024.

Skills

We continued to support the scripted sector with 24 trainees on our Production, Craft and Technical scheme being placed across our Northern Ireland Screen funded Drama, Feature Film and Large scale productions. One of our Art Department trainees finished on the scheme and has quickly become firmly embedded in the Art Department gaining her first credit as Assistant Art Director on C5 drama series Ellis.

The 6th iteration of NI Screen’s flagship Factual Entertainment training scheme completed in October 23, with 7 out of the 9 trainee alumni currently employed in our local Production Companies. We further supported a trainee who stepped up to Junior Assistant Producer at Strident Media with support of our Stepping Up scheme.

The stepping up scheme which supports individuals who are ready to step up to the next position on their career trajectory, was fully utilised this year with 66 individuals benefiting from the award across the priority sectors.

A Trainee Script Editor completed his 12 month placement with Drama Production Company Mammoth Screen and is now their Belfast based Script Editor working on projects such as World on Fire for BBC1.

This year we completed a study of our trainee alumni across all Northern Ireland Screen trainee schemes and between 2018 – 2023 there has been an above 75% retention rate of trainees still working in the screen industries.

BFI Skills Cluster

In 23/24, 21 proposals across the 3 strands of Pathways, CPD and Innovative & Technologies have been successfully funded. The funded projects vary in scale, ranging from small, one-off initiatives that train a small number of individuals to more extensive programmes of activity. The steering group overseeing these activities comprises 12 members, representing industry including PGGB, Screenskills, BECTU, BBC and PACT. Key stakeholders, in addition to the steering group, include training providers who are integral to the skills cluster and further education colleges, who are engaged and informed about the cluster's objectives.

New & Emerging Talent

The films selected for the short film call in December 2023 are being contracted and we are meeting with the creative teams regarding production logistics. The showcase at Bafta took place on 25th April 2024 and five short films were screening. They were I AM AN INDIVIDUAL, MALCOLM, MUIRGEN, NEVER MIND WALNUT STREET and SHATTERED. Network Ireland is representing the following short films as sales agents: STAN BY ME (Italic Pig) YOU LEFT YOUR PHONE (Sixteen South) and BAD VIBES written and directed by Emily Foran and produced by Poli Productions.

1. ***Díolta Faoina Luach,*** Macha Media’s docu drama on the life of Séamas Mac Murchaidh won TV Programme of the Year at the Oireachtas Communication Awards.

1. Fine Point Films’ feature ***Kneecap*** won the Audience Award at Sundance, the first Irish language film to screen at the festival.

1. Lolly Spence has extended her Ulster-Scots Consultant role into presenting with Below the Radar’s new factual entertainment BBC NI series ***Oul Treasures***. The series has been recommissioned for a second run.

1. Former USBF Production Trainee Jane Rea has stepped up at Below the Radar as producer on ***Oul Treasures*** and is also pursuing her presenting ambitions with Clean Slate’s digital tourism series ***Discover Ulster-Scots Places***.

Education

Creative Learning Centres (CLC): The 3 centres engaged with over 2,600 teachers who either completed training units and/or participated in extended professional learning programmes. The CLC’s delivered sessions across the year to 7,600 young people within schools, with over 1,000 participating outside of school.  79% of all activity continued across 97 partnership schools with a large catchment of young people from disadvantaged areas who all received key-stage-specific training. All schools and participants are based in Northern Ireland.

Into Film has distributed over 8,000 copies of their Story Builder resources across 260 schools with 1,927 pupils involved in direct workshops. The resources are available at Key Stage 2 & 3 across Northern Ireland and its cross-curricular structure has been successfully delivered in classrooms as it not only supports literacy but give students an opportunity to enhance thinking skills and personal capabilities. Into Film are now building important partnerships across local industry but also with TT Games and Warner Bros Discovery across their Story Builder portfolio.

Exhibition

Audiences across the film festivals and at the QFT showed a great appetite for the cinema across the year with over 167,000 attending screenings and events. Belfast Film Festival and Docs Ireland has been going from strength to strength under its new co-Chairmanship and dual programmer structure; Foyle Film Festival pulled off a coup in attracting Academy award winner Thelma Schoonmaker; while Cinemagic continues to deliver a diverse range of family screenings and education events including key supporters like Mark Kermode’s film night.

Heritage & Archive

Funding of £78,800 was secured through the BFI’s Screen Heritage Fund for Northern Ireland Now, a contemporary collecting project designed to give voice to those whose stories are currently underrepresented within our Digital Film Archive. The project underlines our commitment to EDI and will enable us to address gaps within moving image collections, to ensure they better reflect the diversity of life in Northern Ireland today.

UTV Archive Partnership: An extension to the UTV Archive Partnership (ITV, PRONI and Northern Ireland Screen) was formalised in March 2024. Extended until December 2028, the new contract grants additional non-commercial rights to PRONI and Northern Ireland Screen, including provision to make material available globally, to incorporate content into the Belfast Stories project and secures post-expiry rights in material digitised during the Partnership term(s).

Digital Preservation: Migration of legacy audiovisual assets was completed in March 2024. Approximately 300TB of data was transferred to the AWS S3 infrastructure, ensuring that these screen heritage materials are robustly safeguarded.

CINE

By March 2024, **93** 18 month paid job placementswere created since the launch of CINE in 2022.  We don’t anticipate any further recruitments in the final year of the programme due to lack of budget and time restraints.  Although we may fall just short of the anticipated 100 new entrant jobs created through CINE by March 2025, we were able to extend 20 existing contracts by a further 6 months.

Outreach continues to expand across NI with new engagement with housing associations such as Radius and Triangle.  ***“Warm-up sessions”*** as they call them, are planned to enable their clients to see the opportunities within the creative sector. We’ve also had some contact with the Justice System NI in relation to possibly organising training at Hydebank Young Offenders Centre to help with rehabilitation into the workplace.

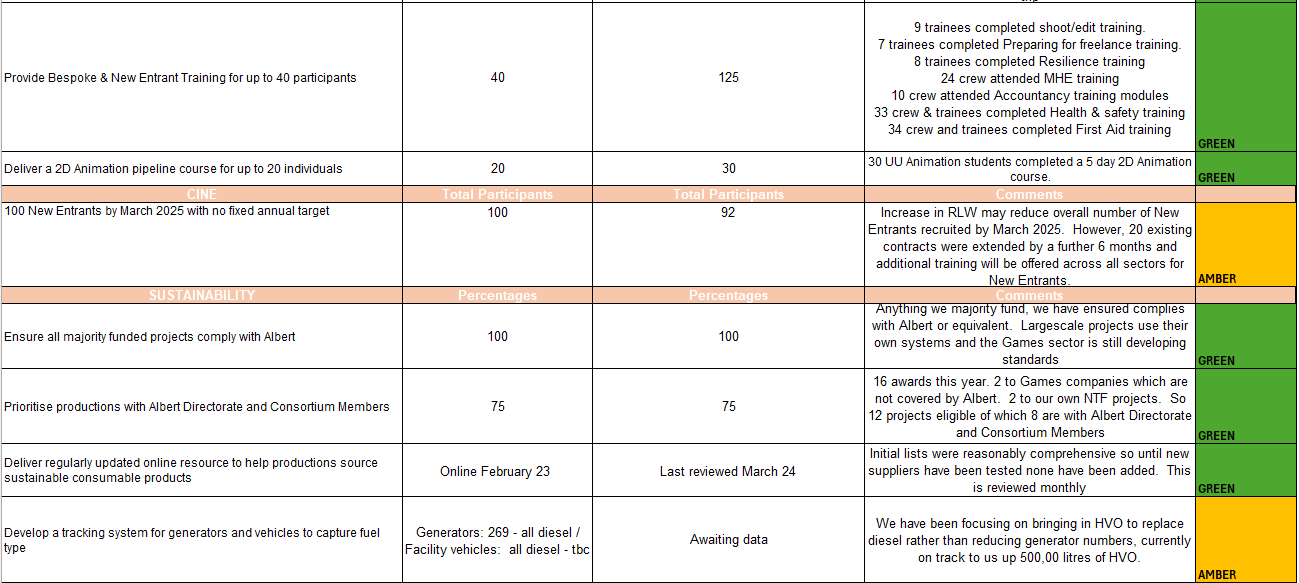
Industry engagement within communities providing further information and training sessions is still a priority.  We are speaking directly with 15 VCO’s regarding delivery of Level 2 OCN’s for the Creative Sectors and OCN have approved the content and agreed unit structure for the first OCN - ***“An Introduction to 2D Animation***” level 2 qualification which has been endorsed and will be partially delivered by industry in the next year.

The increased diversity among successful candidates demonstrates the successful execution of the CINE outreach strategy

There are currently 1,367 people registered on the CINE database who are notified of all new opportunities.

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Description automatically generated**Key Performance Indicators for Business Plan 2022-23 - Year 2 of Stories, Skills & Sustainability 2022-26**

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As with previous years Northern Ireland Screen set challenging targets across all of its core activities which have largely been met within year and for those that are strategy wide, are on course to be met over the 4 year period. The overall Screen Fund target is on course to be achieved and whilst three areas – Large Scale, Factual Entertainment and Interactive – have not met their ratio targets it is anticipated that these will be met by the end of the strategy in March 2026. The KPIs will be revised for 2024-25 to ensure the full scope of core activity across each area of the organisation is measured and to ensure they are in line with the DfE Minister's Priorities.

**Equality, Diversity and Social Inclusion**

Northern Ireland Screen carries out its obligations under Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 (the Act) which places a statutory duty on public authorities, such as Northern Ireland Screen, to address inequalities and demonstrate a measurable positive impact on the lives of people experiencing inequalities. The Act states that each public body is required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity between:

* persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status and sexual orientation;
* between men and women generally;
* persons with a disability and persons without; and
* persons with dependants and persons without

Northern Ireland Screen is an equal opportunities employer. We encourage applications from all suitably qualified persons regardless of their sex; religious or similar philosophical belief; political opinion; race; age; sexual orientation; or, whether they are married or are in a civil partnership; or, whether they are disabled; or whether they have undergone, are undergoing or intend to undergo gender reassignment.

We monitor the application process for all recruitments to ensure that we are encouraging applications from as a wide a range and diverse background as possible.

Northern Ireland Screen has a balanced workforce with the Senior Management Team reflecting this although we are cognisant that there are some under-represented groups which, should vacancies arise, will seek to address. Overall, the workforce remains representative of the census in Northern Ireland and we seek to ensure that any under-represented groups across the workforce and in specific areas are welcomed in the recruitment process.

**Sustainability Report**

Northern Ireland Screen continues to develop a practical approach to sustainability that can deliver immediate and tangible results. We wanted to ensure our strategy was aligned with the 10x economic vision and that it supported its 3 pillars of innovation, inclusive and green growth. However, the challenge has been configuring this strategy to consider the scale and variety of sectors within Northern Ireland Screen’s remit.  After a period of consideration and discussion, we determined that this approach can be supported and achieved by focusing on four key areas:

* Policy
* Technology
* Training
* Infrastructure

**Policy**

Practical solutions to sustainability remain the foundation of our strategy, however policy changes will reinforce our commitment and guarantee the conversation grows. Sustainability is an emerging driver for USA, UK and European film productions, a variety of initiatives aiming to improve reporting and increase the adoption of sustainable practices continue to be developed across all regions. In the UK and Ireland Bafta Albert remains the standard platform for carbon reporting on High - End TV (HETV).

Albert Certification is now required on any project where Northern Ireland Screen is the majority funder. Encouraging all projects to calculate their estimated carbon footprint before projects begin and making efforts to reduce the estimated emission before completion.  In a sector where Albert is not applicable, a platform or carbon calculator of similar standing is required.

We have also made Albert Sustainable Production training a compulsory requirement for any new entrants on all our skills programs.

It became evident that if we were to encourage sustainability awareness, we needed to understand and address our own internal performance, which is why our first sustainability audit was commissioned this year. We engaged with Action Renewables to assess their current onsite energy consumption, to establish baseline data.

The aims and objectives of the audit were to:

* Quantify baseline electricity and fuel consumption figures and related CO2e (Carbon dioxide equivalent) emissions (Scope 1 and 2 emissions).
* Quantify carbon emissions resulting from those indirect activities which NI Screen can provide data on e.g. business travel and indirect energy use in leased assets. (Scope 3 Emissions)
* Identify the information and data required to complete the quantification of the remaining Scope 3 emissions over which NI Screen does not have influence.

Following the conclusion of the audit, the base line emissions can be summarised as:

* Scope 1 - 5.5 (tCO2e)2
* Scope 2 - 1.4 (tCO2e)2
* Scope 3 – 29,746.5 (tCO2e)2

As with most organisations scope 3 is significantly higher, much of this is due to activity from our new talent feature projects.  Going forward we can use this base line data to create internal sustainability policies, that should reduce emissions from future activities. Additionally, from this experience we have been able to put data collecting procedures in place that will improve the audit process and increase the availability of sustainability related information.

**Technology**

Technology will be a vital tool in the global industry’s ability to accurately monitor emissions and develop effective solutions. This has been reflected in the success of our “HVO Smart Tank Project”.

The HVO project was the introduction of Hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) to large scale and HETV projects. HVO is a drop-in Biofuel, that can reduce remissions by up to 90%, it requires no vehicle modification and is now accepted by most vehicle manufacturers.  The smart tanks provided by Northern Ireland Screen allow projects within our studio facilitates, to allocate access codes to each department, creating both secure storage and accurate performance data.  Following the conclusion of the industry strikes, we have seen an increased uptake of HVO, as of March 2024 the Northern Ireland Screen industry has replaced over 250,000 litres of diesel with HVO, an estimated carbon reduction of up 603 tonnes.  At the current rate we estimate that HVO consumption will increase to over 500,00 litres by the middle of 2024.  This an example of our support for projects that offer practical solutions with immediate results. The project’s success was further cemented by being short listed for Sustainability Project of the year at the 2024 Digital DNA awards in Belfast.

Food waste can generate up to 347 tons of waste per production, to address this we have introduced the Olio food waste app to the local industry. Olio provides a food sharing platform where production caters can notify local volunteers about available food at the end of each shooting day.  Olio then produce each productions carbon reduction data that can be entered directly into their Albert calculator. On the two productions that have used Olio, they have redistributed over 1000 meals to local communities.  Northern Ireland Screen are currently working with Olio to increase the platforms presence across all our projects in 2024/25.

The creation of a circular economy within the screen industry is a fundamental aspect of our sustainability strategy. At present the redistribution of sets and materials is done manually on a project-by-project bases, while successful it is also becoming increasingly time consuming. To address this, we are working with, an award-winning asset management facility that specialise in storing and preserving sets props and costumes.

**Training**

Northern Ireland Screen has always understood the importance of training and skills development for the long-term success of the screen industries.  Training both current and new entrants on the need for sustainable approaches to project workflows is crucial to ensuring sustainability becomes an accepted requirement.

Northern Ireland’s first project-based Sustainability department was established in 2023, consisting of 4 local crew overseeing the environmental performance of a large-scale production at both Titanic and Belfast Harbour Studios.  This departments presence has contributed to the early adaption of HVO, improved waste management and infrastructure upgrades, including increased grid connections.

The department also includes Northern Ireland Screens first’s sustainability trainee, employed through our Production Craft and Technical skills scheme.  The 2-year scheme will allow the trainee to gain valuable production sustainability knowledge across a variety projects, potentially leading to future sustainability management roles and the continued growth of the department.

Following the departments success on their current production they have now confirmed employment on the next project at Titanic Studios while also consulting on a variety of upcoming HETV projects.

This year has also seen Northern Ireland’s large-scale virtual production facility, Studio Ulster move closer to completion. Virtual production has the potential to play a central role in the screen industries net zero ambitions. To ensure it achieves this potential we identified the need for greater understanding of the technology from the key project decision makers and increased upskilling of NI resident crew.  A 250k investment was made to create the Northen Ireland Screen Virtual Production training program in partnership with Ulster University, training over 300 crew, consisting of Producers, Directors, Cinematographers, Production designers, VFX supervisors and many other creators.

**Infrastructure**

Similarly to commissions of other nationals and regions there are limitations to the level of sustainability requirements that Northern Ireland Screen can enforce without providing significant financial support. By investing in infrastructure, we can remove barriers to sustainability for the sectors and not just individual projects.

The tanks provided for the HVO project are the first example of infrastructure investment that now provides large scale projects with a necessary tool for carbon reduction. Increased grid connections recently installed at Titanic studios have further reduced the weekly carbon emissions by 13 tonnes and the number of generators required on site.

Production facility fleets have been recognised as an area that requires further attention, not only for improving environmental performance but also for improving accessibility. Increased accessibility infrastructure will remove the current barriers that limited opportunities for those living with disabilities from pursuing a career in the screen industry.

As part of the British Film Councils, (BFC) corporate social responsibility grant, Northern Ireland Screen was awarded £5000 towards our “Accessible Facilities Project”. This contribution will be used to develop a prototype solar powered and accessible cast trailer, to showcase the potential of increased investment in the project.

Additionally, we are continuing to identify transformational opportunities in areas such as, EV infrastructure, stage insulation, plus energy, water and waste management.

**24/25 and Beyond**

Our initial efforts have always been on large scale and HETV productions, due to their higher carbon emissions and greater environmental footprint.  Over the next year we plan to build on our current successes and announce a range of exciting projects that will improve on food waste reduction and the creation of a circular economy.

We are also keen to ensure Studio Ulster reaches it sustainable performance potential, to achieve this we will encouraging and supporting the studios participation in the “Abert Studio Sustainability Standard”.  The Studio Sustainability standard is a voluntary standard for studio facilities that has been created by and for the industry.

By taking part, studios will be able to focus and pinpoint key areas within their facility where they can make improvements to reduce their environmental impact over 6 areas: climate, circularity, nature, people, management and data.

Beyond that we hope to begin identifying certification platforms and incentives relevant to the other screen sectors, particularly in games and animation. Now that we have established a clear structure and road map to environmental sustainability, we can effectively measure our performance and make changes accordingly.

**Principal risks and uncertainties**

The principal risks and uncertainties facing Northern Ireland Screen were identified as follows:

The Writers and Actors strikes during the year generated very considerable risk and ultimately removed approximately £40 million of direct spend from production activity from the schedule.  The strikes also played a considerable part in the loss to Northern Ireland of the Large Scale project with the working title Bulero.  However, this risk was managed to a significant degree by the level of diversification in the Northern Ireland screen industry which allowed for an increase in TV Drama and Independent Film to partially compensate for the loss of Large Scale activity during the period.

The education, outreach and cultural activities of Northern Ireland Screen came under considerable pressure during the year due to a large cut in the annual funding from DfC.  However, this risk was entirely mitigated by DfE providing a sum of additional funding equal to the cut implemented by DfC.

Risks relating to the development and rollout of Studio Ulster have been significant throughout the year as the project progresses through the stages of development but those risks have been well managed with a number of key hurdles crossed including the Full Business Case, the physical build, and the appointment of the equipment supplier.  Northern Ireland Screen is closely associated with these risks as it acts on DfE’s behalf in relation to the BRCD support of the project and CEO acts as IDM.

As a development agency working in a dynamic and fast moving industrial sector, Northern Ireland Screen carries constant risk associated with delivering the outcomes outlined in our strategy; ensuring relatively stable demand for the freelance crew base that both supports and benefits from the screen industry in Northern Ireland and for the supply chain companies involved in supporting particularly large-scale production including the 3 studio complexes; and ensuring an even cashflow profile year to year.  This risk was well managed through the year, but the strikes did impact negatively for that section of freelance crew that works exclusively on Large Scale projects.

**Additional**

Despite budget allocations remaining uncertain, Northern Ireland Screen has and will continue to pursue its strategic goals.

For details on how Northern Ireland Screen manages risk and uncertainties please see the Governance Statement.

**Future Developments**

Northern Ireland Screen continues to liaise with DfE and DfC on finalising budgets for the remainder of the Strategy period 2022-26.

**Other**

There was no non-financial information, to include social matters, respect for human rights, anti-corruption and anti-bribery matters, that need disclosure in this year’s report.

All related party transactions are detailed on page 65, note 14.

Northern Ireland Screen will continue to buy more sustainable and efficient products and services with the aim of achieving the best long-term, overall value for money for society.



**Richard Williams**

**24th September 2024**

***Corporate Governance Report***

**Directors’ Report for the year ended 31 March 2024**

Board Members are appointed by the Minister, and in the wider public interest, the Permanent Secretary may make appointments to the NI Screen Board.  Appointments of Board Members will normally be for a period of three to five years, with the possibility of re-appointment up to a further four years. These appointments are made in accordance with the Code of Practice issued by the Commissioner of Public Appointments for Northern Ireland.

The Board shall be composed of a Chair and up to 12 members. A position of vice-chair is optional. The Board must have a total of 5 members present to achieve a quorum.

The Directors who served during the year are as follows:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Sir David Sterling (Chair) | | |
| Brenda Romero | Róise Ní Bhaoill | Richard Hanna |
| Mark Huffam | Susan Picken | Tom Gray |
| Carmel Mullan | Peter Weil | Greg Maguire (left 30.6.23) |
| Michael Fanning | Fionnuala Deane |  |

Richard Williams served as Chief Executive for the full year.

**Conflicts of interest**

There are no company directorships or other significant interests held by members of the management board which may conflict with their management responsibilities. Directors declare any interest in successful applications to Northern Ireland Screen and commercial relationships with Northern Ireland Screen (see note 14).

**Personal data related incidents**

There were no personal data related incidents across 2023-24.

**Payments to Suppliers**

Northern Ireland Screen is required to comply with the British Standards for achieving good payment performance in Commercial Transactions (BS 7890) and the Late Payment of Commercial Debts (Interest) Act 1998 as amended and supplemented by the Late Payment of Commercial Debt Regulations 2002. We aim to pay valid invoices within 10 working days in line with the Government Prompt Payment Target.

The percentage of bills paid within 10 days in 2023-24 is 88% (2022-23: 68%). For comparison purposes the Northern Ireland Civil Service percentages were 2023-24 91.42% and 2022-23 92.61%.

The trade payable days at 31 March 2024 is less than 10 days.

**Prior Year Adjustments**

There were no prior year adjustments in 2023-24.

**Risk**

The principal risks and uncertainties facing Northern Ireland Screen during the year are outlined in the Strategic Report. The management of risks and uncertainties is set out in the Governance Statement.

**Disclosure of Information to Auditor**

The Directors confirm that:

1. So far as the Directors are aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company’s auditor is unaware; and
2. They have taken all necessary steps as Directors in order to make themselves aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that the company’s auditor is aware of that information.

This confirmation is given and should be interpreted in accordance with the provisions of s.418 of the Companies Act 2006.

**Pension arrangements**

The company operated the NILGOSC (Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee) pension scheme from 1 April 2013. NILGOSC is a final salary contracted out occupational pension scheme. The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable by the company during the year. Northern Ireland Screen’s share of the scheme recorded net pension liabilities at 31 March 2024 was nil (31 March 2023: £0.4m).

The pension liabilities relate to the defined benefit scheme which is managed by the Pension Fund Committee of NILGOSC and the Directors of Northern Ireland Screen do not have any control in the management of this Fund. The future financing of any Northern Ireland Screen liabilities is expected to be met by DfE.

**Complaints Handling**

Northern Ireland Screen operates a complaints handling procedure in order that a person or organisation can express dissatisfaction about an aspect of the service received from the organisation. Further details are available on the website.

In dealing with complaints, Northern Ireland Screen seeks to restore relationships as far as possible. It makes every effort to make it easy to voice concerns through handling complaints quickly and without undue fuss or bureaucracy. Complaints are handled confidentially, with fairness and objectivity, and the outcome is made known to the complainant. All complaints or comments received, and actions taken are monitored and retained including the speed with which they are actioned. Complaints are analysed to identify problem areas where action may be required in order to provide a better quality of service, and suggestions on how to improve services are welcomed.

There were no complaints received in 2023-24.

**Auditor’s remuneration**

The auditors remuneration for 2023-24 is £17,900. There has been no other work carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office or the Comptroller and Auditor General on Northern Ireland Screen.



**Richard Williams**

**24th September 2024**

**Statement of Directors’ and Accounting Officer’s Responsibilities**

The Department for the Economy (DfE) has directed Northern Ireland Screen Commission to prepare for each financial year a Statement of Accounts in the form and on the basis set out in the Accounts Direction.  The accounts are prepared on an accruals basis and must give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of Northern Ireland Screen, of its income and expenditure, Statement of Financial Position and cash flows for the financial year.

In preparing the accounts, the Accounting Officer is required to comply with the requirements of the Government Financial Reporting Manual and in particular to:

* Observe the Accounts Direction issued by the DfE, including the relevant accounting and disclosure requirements, and apply suitable accounting policies on a consistent basis;

* Make judgements and estimates on a reasonable basis;

* Such internal controls as the Accounting Officer determines is necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements that are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error;

* State whether applicable accounting standards as set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual have been followed, and disclose and explain any material departures in the financial statements;

* Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis; and

* Confirm that the Annual Report and Accounts as a whole is fair, balanced and understandable and take personal responsibility for the Annual Report and Accounts and the judgements required for determining that it is fair, balanced and understandable.

* The Accounting Officer of the DfE has designated the Chief Executive as the Accounting Officer of Northern Ireland Screen. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer include responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding Northern Ireland Screen’s assets, as set out in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland issued by the Department of Finance.

As Accounting Officer I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information that Northern Ireland Screen’s auditors are aware of that information.  So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

**Governance Statement**

The DfE Permanent Secretary has delegated the CEO of Northern Ireland Screen as the Accounting Officer of Northern Ireland Screen. The responsibilities of an Accounting Officer, including responsibility for the propriety and regularity of the public finances for which the Accounting Officer is answerable, for keeping proper records and for safeguarding Northern Ireland Screen’s assets, are set out in Managing Public Money NI issued by DoF. As the Accounting Officer, I have taken all the steps that I ought to have taken to make myself aware of any relevant audit information and to establish that Northern Ireland Screen’s auditors are aware of that information. So far as I am aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the auditors are unaware.

The Accounting Officer of Northern Ireland Screen has responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal control that supports the achievement of the policies, aims and objectives of Northern Ireland Screen, whilst safeguarding the public funds and the assets of Northern Ireland Screen, for which he is personally responsible, in accordance with the responsibilities assigned to him by the Board of Northern Ireland Screen and in Managing Public Money Northern Ireland. These systems have been in place for the full year with close monitoring particularly in relation to the pandemic.

The Accounting Officer has responsibility for risk management and this is carried out through a risk framework

which is regularly reviewed by the Management Board and reported to the Board quarterly and to the Department twice per year through the Assurance Statement. This framework has been in place for the full financial year and regularly reviewed.

Northern Ireland Screen aims to manage risk at a reasonable level to achieve its policies, aims and objectives. As Accounting Officer, it is my responsibility to ensure that an appropriate risk management process is in place within the organisation to assist with the decision making process. The aim is not to eliminate all risk, but to mitigate and manage risks through risk management strategies and policies.

Northern Ireland Screen’s Management Statement and Financial Memorandum with DfE was reviewed in May 2019 and more recently in preparation for the Partnership Agreement. They set out the relationship between DfE and Northern Ireland Screen and define the financial and administrative framework within which Northern Ireland Screen operates.  Northern Ireland Screen’s Financial Memorandum which should be read in conjunction with the Management Statement sets out the framework for the management and control of the finance of Northern Ireland Screen.

**Compliance with Corporate Governance Best Practice**

The publication, in April 2013, of “Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice NI” and its requirement for an effective Board which provides leadership for the business, helping it to operate in a business-like manner, advising on strategic and operational issues affecting the performance of the organisation and its function to scrutinise and challenge organisational polices and performance, whilst not mandated for Non-Departmental Public Bodies (NDPBs), has been adopted in large part by Northern Ireland Screen with a view to identifying what measures can be taken to enhance current governance arrangements.

Northern Ireland Screen’s compliance with “Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice NI” was the subject of an internal audit review in 2013.  The review examined Northern Ireland Screen’s compliance with sections 2, 3, 4 and 5 of the Code which were deemed the most relevant to an NDPB.  Findings have since been actioned through the appointment of a co-opted member to the Audit and Risk Committee.  A review of our Corporate Governance in 2021 recommended a refresh of all the Terms of Reference for each of the Committees and the development of a Schedule of Matters Reserved for the Board which were adopted in December 2021.

**Functional Standards**

DAO 5/21 mandated the use of Functional Standards across all Government Departments and ALBs. This standard sets expectations for the direction and management of functions across government, including management of functional standards, in order to:

• drive high performance and achieve excellent outcomes for the citizen

• ensure consistent and improving collaborative practices and culture across government organisations

Northern Ireland Screen has already clearly defined standards within the organisation which are interpreted through policies and procedures for example.  The purpose of the organisation is clearly articulated in the Business Plan and Strategy and is underpinned with a culture of continuous improvement.  We will through 2024-

25 further map and document our work to the Functional Standards as described in DAO 05/21.

**Governance Framework**

The Accounting Officer of Northern Ireland Screen is responsible for ensuring that audit and risk management systems and internal controls are in place, and Northern Ireland Screen complies with all statutory and legal obligations.  The Accounting Officer has responsibility to ensure that Northern Ireland Screen’s Board and its Executive members adhere to the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum agreed between DfE and Northern Ireland Screen.

The Board, in its role of supporting the Accounting Officer, has corporate responsibility for ensuring that Northern Ireland Screen fulfils the aims and objectives set by DfE as approved by its Minister and for promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources.

Governance and sponsorship responsibility for Northern Ireland Screen lies with DfE.  Northern Ireland Screen will continue to have a service provision relationship within the Department for Communities (DfC) in relation to aspects of Northern Ireland Screen’s activities that fall within DfC’s policy responsibilities.  However, the governance in relation to this funding is channelled through DfE.

The Board’s role is to:

* establish the overall strategic direction of Northern Ireland Screen within the policy and resources framework determined by the sponsor Department and Minister;
* constructively challenge Northern Ireland Screen’s executive team in their planning, target setting and delivery of performance;
* ensure that the sponsor Department and other funders are kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of Northern Ireland Screen or on the attainability of its targets, and determine the steps needed to deal with such changes;
* ensure that any statutory or administrative requirements for the use of public funds are complied with; that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority and any delegated authority agreed with the sponsor Department, and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds; and that, in reaching decisions, the Board takes into account all relevant guidance issued by DoF and the sponsor Department;
* ensure that the Board receives and reviews regular financial information concerning the management of Northern Ireland Screen; is informed in a timely manner about any concerns about the activities of Northern Ireland Screen; and provides positive assurance to the sponsor Department that appropriate action has been taken on such concerns;
* demonstrate high standards of corporate governance at all times, including using the independent audit committee, to help the Board to address the key financial and other risks facing Northern Ireland Screen;
* appoint, with the sponsor Department’s approval, a Chief Executive to Northern Ireland Screen and, in consultation with the sponsor Department, set performance objectives for the Chief Executive, which give due weight to the proper management and use of public monies; and
* to oversee and review the remuneration package for the Northern Ireland Screen’s Chief Executive, in line with the relevant benchmarking to Northern Ireland Senior Civil Service employees.

**Board Membership**

Northern Ireland Screen is currently governed by a Board of eleven non-executive directors:

Sir David Sterling KCB – Chair Susan Picken

Mark Huffam Tom Gray

Fionnuala Deane Brenda Romero

Róise Ní Bhaoill Richard Hanna

Michael Fanning Carmel Mullan

Peter Weil Greg Maguire (left 30.6.23)

Board Attendance in 2023-24:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 20.6.23 | 19.9.23 | 12.12.23 | 19.3.24 |
| Sir David Sterling (Chair) | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Michael Fanning | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Fionnuala Deane | **a** | **x** | **a** | **x** |
| Susan Picken | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Mark Huffam | **x** | **a** | **x** | **x** |
| Carmel Mullan | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Roise Ni Bhaoill | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Richard Hanna | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Peter Weil | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Tom Gray | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Brenda Romero | **x** | **a** | **x** | **x** |
| Greg Maguire | **a** |  |  |  |

The Board of Northern Ireland Screen is required to review its effectiveness annually. The latest review was completed in July 2023 and no issues were identified.  We have an obligation to undertake an independent Board Evaluation every two years.  This will be carried out in the 2024-25 financial year.

In each year, the Chair of Northern Ireland Screen undertakes individual Board member appraisals, the results of which are submitted to Northern Ireland Screen’s sponsor department, DfE.

Board members are required to complete Conflicts of Interest declarations annually and a Register of Interests is updated annually.

The quality of data is considered by Board members to be substantial.  Papers distributed to the Board in advance of meetings include:

* Agenda
* Minutes from previous meeting
* Management accounts for period
* CEO report to the Board
* Corporate Risk Register
* Performance Indicator Report for period
* Committee Reports

Board members have sufficient opportunity to challenge the quality of papers issued to them.

**Committees of the Board**

Northern Ireland Screen’s Board may determine that certain aspects of its powers and responsibilities will be exercised by Committees. The composition, terms of reference and reporting requirements of the Committees will be determined by the Board. The Board receives updates from each Committee Chair at the quarterly Board meetings.

Committees do not have decision making powers except in the case of the Investment Committee, the Irish Language Broadcast Fund and Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund Investment Committees.

**Audit and Risk Committee**

The Board of Northern Ireland Screen has established an Audit and Risk Committee to support them in their responsibilities for issues of risk control and governance.  The Committee consisted of 3 non-executive Board members dropping to 2 non-executive Board members in the current year and is tasked with reviewing the comprehensiveness of assurances in meeting the Board and Accounting Officer’s assurance needs and reviewing the reliability and integrity of these assurances.  The Committee Chair, following each meeting, reports to the Accounting Officer and Board summarising the business undertaken by the Committee and offers views and advice from the Committee on issues on which they consider the Accounting Officer and Board should be taking action.

The Audit and Risk Committee prepares an annual report to support the preparation of the Governance Statement.  The report details the membership of the Committee and their attendance at meetings throughout the year.  It also lists members’ declared conflicts of interest.

An overview of Committee business in the year covering the discharge of the Committee responsibilities, their remit on risk management and corporate governance and key actions is also included.

The Audit and Risk Committee will advise the Board and Accounting officer on:

* The strategic processes for risk, control and governance and the governance statement;
* Assurances relating to the management of risk and corporate governance requirements for the organisation;
* The annual financial statements with particular focus on changes in accounting policy, major areas of judgement, significant audit adjustments, going concern assumption, and compliance with accounting standards;
* Key contact for any “Raising Concerns”.
* The issues identified within the Report to those Charged with Governance and the appropriateness of management’s response;
* The nature and scope of the annual audit in advance (in discussion with NIAO if necessary) and any problems or reservations arising out of the audit with NIAO (in absence of management if required);
* The criteria set for selection and appointment of internal audit;
* The scope and effectiveness of internal audit’s work including planning and operation of the work and the Internal Audit Annual Report;
* The appropriateness of the systems and procedures to promote efficiency, economy and effectiveness;
* Reports and DAOs from department, NIAO and other organisations;
* Anti-fraud policies, whistle-blowing processes, and arrangements for special investigations.

The Committee is authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its terms of reference, to obtain any information it requires from any employee and to investigate any issues.

Audit and Risk Committee Attendance in 2023-24:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 13.6.23 | 12.9.23 | 5.12.23 | 12.3.24 |
| Carmel Mullan (Chair) | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Susan Picken | **a** | **a** | **x** | **a** |
| Tom Gray | **x** | **x** |  |  |

**Strategic Resources Committee**

The primary purpose of the Strategic Resources Committee is to give assurance to the Board in the stewardship and propriety on the use of the organisation’s resource, to ensure effective financial management, the implementation of HR Strategies and Policies and that any issues are reported to the Board in a timely manner.

The Strategic Resources Committee will:

* Review and recommend acceptance of the annual budget and Operating Plan and Financial Strategy;
* Review financial operating information including quarterly management accounts;
* Exercise a challenge function to the budget and planning assumptions;
* Review financial policies and procedures;
* Provide advice and guidance to the Board on estates, leasing, and insurance issues;
* Review policies relating to Human Resource issues;
* Ensure that the level and structure of Northern Ireland Screen staffing, including grading and numbers of staff, are appropriate to its functions and the requirements of efficiency, effectiveness and economy;
* Review of performance appraisal and staff development;
* Review performance of the organisation including reporting against Key Performance Indicators; Review of mid- term and final evaluations, and review of strategy appraisals;
* The Committee may procure specialist ad hoc advice at the expense of the organisation subject to budgets agreed by the Board and in consultation with CEO and Chair.

The Strategic Resources Committee will meet 4 times a year (additional meetings may be convened by the Chair as deemed necessary) and all meetings will normally be attended by both the Accounting Officer and Chief Operating Officer.

The Strategic Resources Committee will also periodically review its own effectiveness and report the results of that review to the Board.

Strategic Resources Committee attendance in 2023-24:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 13.6.23 | 12.9.23 | 5.12.23 | 12.3.24 |
| Sir David Sterling (Chair) | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Michael Fanning | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| Vacant |  |  |  |  |

**Investment Committee**

Northern Ireland Screen has established a number of Investment Committees for its Screen Fund, Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund and Irish Language Broadcast Fund.  All of these Committees will:

* Make decisions on applications of over £100k to the Northern Ireland Screen Fund in accordance with the published criteria.
* Agree and confirm the award amount and recommendations on contract conditions;
* Defer an application to another meeting if appropriate;
* Reject an application;
* Note all applications to the Screen Fund with a value of under £100k.
* Consider any additional or unusual risk or value associated with any applicant under consideration.

All decisions will be made based on Northern Ireland Screen’s Criteria for Decision Making and relevant Guidelines.

These Committees have all functioned effectively throughout the year to March 2024 and have reported on their activities to the Board of Northern Ireland Screen at each quarterly Board meeting.

Investment Committee Attendance 2023-24:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Peter Weil (Chair) | Greg Maguire | Michael Fanning | Susan Picken | Fionnuala Deane | Tom Gray |
| 25.4.23 | **a** | **a** | **x\*** | **a** | **x** | **a** |
| 31.5.23 | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| 14.6.23 | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **x** | **a** |
| 16.8.23 | **a** | **a** | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| 28.9.23 | **a** | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| 24.11.23 | **a** | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| 6.12.23 | **a** | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **x** |
| 31.1.24 | **a** | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |
| 5.3.24 | **a** | **x** | **a** | **a** | **a** | **a** |

\*Michael Fanning excluded himself from this meeting declaring a Conflict of Interest as he had an association with the producers of the project.

**The Management Team of Northern Ireland Screen**

The Chief Executive may delegate the day to day administration of his responsibilities to the Senior Management Team (SMT) in Northern Ireland Screen; this core team is comprised of the senior leaders in all functions across Northern Ireland Screen and presently has 12 members including the Chief Executive Officer who is also the Accounting Officer.

The SMT will take responsibility for delivering objectives and managing the day-to-day performance of specified teams within Northern Ireland Screen.  SMT members may deputise for the Chief Executive as and when appropriate.  The SMT also assist in the development of Northern Ireland Screen’s policy and strategy and they report regularly to the Board through the Chief Executive at regular Board meetings.

**Business Planning**

The Accounting Officer’s responsibilities include ensuring that Northern Ireland Screen produces a 4-year strategy and an annual business plan within the timescales set by DfE.  The organisation consults with DfE on the preparation of its corporate strategy.

The strategy relevant to this period was developed and launched in October 2022.  The strategy sets out Northern Ireland Screen’s key objectives and associated performance indicators and targets relating to the period of the strategy.  Performance against this strategy is independently reviewed – the interim review will take place in 2024.  A forecast of expenditure and income for the strategy period is included.

The Strategy covering the period 2022-26 received Casework Approval in September 2021.

The annual Business Plan is also prepared in consultation with DfE and is submitted to DfE for approval each year.  The annual plan includes key targets and milestones for the year and is linked to budget information to facilitate resource allocation by DfE, DfC and other funders.

Quarterly Performance Indicator reports are now submitted to DfE and are discussed at departmental accountability meetings and at all Northern Ireland Screen Board meetings.

The annual Business Plan is available on Northern Ireland Screen’s website.

Business cases and post project evaluations are completed.

**Risk Management**

Risk at Northern Ireland Screen is primarily handled by ensuring that those responsible, whether staff or Board members, are suitably qualified and experienced.  This is critical in the management of investments in film and television production and development, where experience is the only tool that differentiates between viable and non-viable projects.

Northern Ireland Screen was issued a ‘satisfactory’ internal audit review of risk management during the financial year 2023-24.

Financial decisions are structured to separate responsibility as far as is possible in a relatively small organisation with a long-established structure of Investment Committees assessing proposed decisions laid out by appropriately qualified and experienced staff.

A system of risk management is maintained to inform the Board’s decisions and all reputational risks to the organisation are drawn to the attention of the Chair and are properly managed.

Northern Ireland Screen’s Risk Register outlines the key corporate risks facing Northern Ireland Screen as identified by its Senior Management Team. The Risk Register details management’s assessment of the key risks by rating associated controls and actions required to minimise the risk occurring. The updated Risk Register is presented to the Audit and Risk Committee and to the Board at each meeting on a quarterly basis. Key risks identified at 31 March 2024 were:

* The Writers and Actors strikes during the year generated very considerable risk and ultimately removed approximately £40 million of direct spend from production activity from the schedule.  The strikes also played a considerable part in the loss to Northern Ireland of the Large Scale project with the working title Bulero.  However, this risk was managed to a significant degree by the level of diversification in the Northern Ireland screen industry which allowed for an increase in TV Drama and Independent Film to partially compensate for the loss of Large Scale activity during the period.
* The education, outreach and cultural activities of Northern Ireland Screen came under considerable pressure during the year due to a large cut in the annual funding from DfC.  However, this risk was entirely mitigated by DfE providing a sum of additional funding equal to the cut implemented by DfC.

* Risks relating to the development and rollout of Studio Ulster have been significant throughout the year as the project progresses through the stages of development but those risks have been well managed with a number of key hurdles crossed including the Full Business Case, the physical build, and the appointment of the equipment supplier.  Northern Ireland Screen is closely associated with these risks as it acts on DfE’s behalf in relation to the BRCD support of the project and CEO acts as IDM.
* As a development agency working in a dynamic and fast moving industrial sector, Northern Ireland Screen carries constant risk associated with delivering the outcomes outlined in our strategy; ensuring relatively stable demand for the freelance crew base that both supports and benefits from the screen industry in Northern Ireland and for the supply chain companies involved in supporting particularly large-scale production including the 3 studio complexes; and ensuring an even cashflow profile year to year.  This risk was well managed through the year, but the strikes did impact negatively for that section of freelance crew that works exclusively on Large Scale projects.
* Cost inflation across all aspect of the production process including film studios, travel & transport and crew rates is a concern in relation to our ongoing competitiveness as an international production hub;

The Accounting Officer of Northern Ireland Screen acknowledges, through the completion of the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement, responsibility for maintaining a sound system of internal governance which supports the achievement of Northern Ireland Screen’s and DfE’s policies, aims and objectives, whilst safeguarding the public funds and organisational assets for which he is personally responsible.

The Board Assurance Statement is completed by the CEO, Accounting Officer for Northern Ireland Screen, and submitted to DfE for review and comment. This document is designed to evidence the CEO’s responsibility to manage risk to a reasonable level but is not designed to eliminate all risk to achieve policies, aims and objectives; therefore, it can only provide reasonable and not absolute assurance of effectiveness.

The risk management process is integrated with normal management processes and informs the annual business planning cycle so as to link risk management and internal governance firmly with Northern Ireland Screen’s ability to fulfil its business objectives.

Responsibility for overseeing and monitoring all risk has been delegated to the Accounting Officer. Through the management team he ensures that all staff and Board members have received training and guidance on risk.

**Fraud Risk and Information Risk**

To safeguard public resources and to raise staff awareness against the risk of fraud, Northern Ireland Screen has a Fraud Prevention policy and Fraud Response plan which are regularly reviewed and updated.

In 2023-24 there were no incidents of actual or suspected fraud.

Staff are aware of, and have received relevant training in respect of fraud, whistle-blowing and the requirements of the Bribery Act 2010.  All potential or alleged frauds will be reported to DfE and other appropriate bodies.   A Fraud Risk Analysis is submitted to DfE annually.

For grant awards made by Northern Ireland Screen, there is an adequate system of grant sampling and verification of grant payments in place to detect fraud.

Appropriate arrangements are in place within Northern Ireland Screen to ensure that all data, including personal/sensitive data is held and used securely and whistle-blowers are protected. Northern Ireland Screen complies with GDPR European data legislation.

**Governance and Accountability within Northern Ireland Screen**

The greatest level of assurance that Northern Ireland Screen’s governance processes are working effectively will be obtained through a fully embedded risk management process.  The regular review and reporting of risks and governance activity provides a second level of assurance.  Reviews by internal and external audit provide an independent assurance that the processes are working effectively.  Control mechanisms are in place to ensure that the risk to information is minimal.

The main procedures in place to monitor the effectiveness of the governance system are as follows:

* Regular meetings with the officials from DfE to consider both operational and strategic issues and matters relating to the system of internal governance;

* Bi-Annual Assurance Reports and an annual Fraud Risk Analysis;
* Northern Ireland Screen’s Risk Management policy explains the organisation’s underlying approach to risk management, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Board, Audit and Risk Committee, Strategic Resources Committee, the Senior Management Team and Internal and External Audit;
* Following best practice in procurement of goods and services;
* Regular reports by administrative staff on progress against principal financial targets and the projected financial outcome for the year, and progress reports by staff responsible for major funds;
* Detailed progress reports to the Audit and Risk Committee, the Strategic Resources Committee and the Board of Northern Ireland Screen at their regular meetings and the inclusion of performance measures and results against targets in the annual operating plan;
* Reports from the internal auditors to the Audit and Risk Committee on the system of internal governance for the year;

* Report to those charged with governance by NIAO on issues noting during the course of the audit relating to the financial statements, and provision of opinions by the Comptroller and Auditor General on whether the financial statements give a true and fair view of the affairs of the company and in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them; and

* Periodic reviews of the Risk Register by the Chief Executive, Chief Content Officer and SMT, the Board, Audit and Risk Committee and internal auditors of Northern Ireland Screen.  The principal risks to the achievement of the objectives of Northern Ireland Screen are identified and recorded in the risk register, together with the controls in place and any further controls required to manage the risk effectively, efficiently and economically.   Reports on emerging issues and strategies to deal with any associated risks are made to the Department for the Economy, the Audit and Risk Committee and the Board at their regular meetings.

**Sources of Assurance**

Internal Audit is responsible for providing opinions regarding the adequacy and effectiveness of Northern Ireland Screen’s system of internal governance.  It adopts a classification system for the assurance achieved in each audit.  This classification is based on guidelines issued by the Department of Finance on 26 July 2016, reference DAO (DOF) 07/16.

At the end of each financial year an Internal Audit Assurance Statement is issued to the Audit and Risk Committee of Northern Ireland Screen based on the systems audit work performed during the year.  The following reviews were completed in the year:

**Internal Audit Review**  **Rating**

* Procurement Satisfactory
* Education and Culture Satisfactory
* Risk Management Satisfactory

The Internal Audit Annual Report shows an overall satisfactory level of assurance at the year end.

Northern Ireland Screen was classified by ONS as an NDPB in January 2012 as per the Public Sector Classification Guide and the National Accounts Classification Decisions reports on the ONS website.

**External Audit**

The External Audit of our Statutory Financial Statements is undertaken by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), on behalf of the C&AG. This independent scrutiny of the Financial Statements provides additional assurance in respect of financial regularity. The External Audit Strategy for 2023-24 has been presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. As Accounting Officer, I can confirm that all recommendations included within the 2022-23 RTTCWG have been accepted and have been implemented.

**Review of effectiveness of the System of Internal Governance**

The Accounting Officer has responsibility for reviewing the effectiveness of the system of internal governance. The review of the effectiveness of the system of internal governance is informed by the work of the internal auditors. The comments made by the external auditors in their management letter and other reports also inform this review. The Senior Management Team and senior staff have responsibility for the development and maintenance of the internal governance framework. A plan to address any weaknesses and ensure continuous improvement of the system is in place.  This is overseen by the Audit and Risk Committee, Strategic Resources Committee and prescribed by the internal auditor.

The redrafted MSFM was adopted by Northern Ireland Screen’s Board at its December 2018 meeting and subsequently updated and agreed by the Board in May 2019. The partnership agreement is set to replace the current MSFM which is due to be issued early 2024/25.

However, it should be emphasised that Northern Ireland Screen’s area of work will always carry a higher than average risk profile.  Northern Ireland Screen is in continuous discussion with relevant Government departments regarding the relatively complex funding and governance arrangements under which it operates.

**Internal Governance Divergences 2023-24**

***Update on prior year control issues which continue to be considered as control issues***

None

***Identification of new control issues in current year***

None

As Accounting Officer of Northern Ireland Screen, I am content that the public funds and organisational assets for which I am responsible are safeguarded and have been managed with propriety.  The controls in place within the organisation support the achievement of Northern Ireland Screen’s and the DfE Minister’s policies, aims and objectives.



**Richard Williams**

**24th September 2024**

***Remuneration and Staff Report***

The Remuneration and Staff report sets out Northern Ireland Screen’s remuneration policy for our Board Members and Chief Executive, reports on how that policy has been implemented and details the amounts awarded to Board Members and CEO. It also provides details on remuneration and staff that the Northern Ireland Assembly and others see as key to accountability.

The Northern Ireland Screen Board currently consists of a Chair and 11 members. The terms of office have been varied between 3 and 5 years to facilitate the retention of a sufficient level of experience. General Board members do not receive remuneration with the exception of the Chair which is a remunerated role, and are expected to attend Board and Committee meetings totalling approximately 16 days per annum.

The following sections provide details of the remuneration and pension interests of the Accounting Officer/Chief Executive and Board.

The Directors who served during the year are noted on page 27.

The Chief Executive is appointed by Northern Ireland Screen’s Board of Directors and reports to the Board.

Formal grading methodologies such as Job Evaluation and Grading Support (JEGS) and Job Evaluation for Senior Posts (JESP) are employed to ensure that the post is correctly loaded and graded. The grading of the post is reviewed before the appointment of a new Chief Executive and periodically as determined by DfE or Northern Ireland Screen. Northern Ireland Screen liaises closely with DfE throughout this process. DfE provide advice and guidance as and when required. Northern Ireland Screen obtains DfE approval regarding the proposed remuneration and terms and conditions prior to publication of the advertisement for the position.

The Chief Executive, and Accounting Officer, Richard Williams, receives a salary for his employment and contributions to the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC) defined benefit scheme.

**Remuneration Policy**

The pay remit for the Northern Ireland (NI) public sector, including senior civil servants (SCS) in the NICS, is approved by the Minister of Finance. In the absence of a minister, the permanent secretary confirmed the NICS pay award applicable to salaries from August 2023 onwards. A year end accrual was made in the 2023-24 accounts to provide for the employer costs of revalorisation, progression due to staff moving up the relevant scales and a non-consolidated payment of £1,500 for eligible staff.

**Service Contracts**

The Civil Service Commissioners (NI) Order 1999 requires Civil Service appointments to be made on merit on the basis of fair and open competition. The Recruitment Code published by the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland specifies the circumstances when appointments may be made otherwise. Unless otherwise stated, the officials covered by this report hold appointments that are open-ended. Early termination, other than for misconduct, would result in consideration of the individual receiving compensation as set out in the Civil Service Compensation Scheme. Further information about the work of the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland can be found at [www.nicscommissioners.org](file:///C:\Users\LauraH\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\INetCache\Content.Outlook\MHL3VCG8\www.nicscommissioners.org)

**Remuneration and Staff report (subject to audit):**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | | **2023-24**  **Salary (including pension contributions)**  **£000** | **Employer contribution to NILGOSC scheme**  **£000** | **Total**  **£000** | **2022-23**  **Salary (including pension contributions)**  **£000** | **Employer contribution to NILGOSC scheme**  **£000** | **Total**    **£000** | |
| Richard Williams  *Chief Executive*  Sir David Sterling  *Chair* | 80-85  10-15 | | 15-20  - | 100-110  10-15 | 80-85  5-10 | 15-20  - | | 95-105  5-10 |

**Salary**

‘Salary’ includes gross salary, overtime, reserved rights to London weighting or London allowances, recruitment and retention allowances; private office allowances and any other allowance to the extent that it is subject to UK taxation and any gratia payments.

**Benefits in kind**

The monetary value of benefits in kind covers any benefit provided by the employer and treated by HM Revenue and Customs as a taxable emolument. No benefits in kind were payable in 2023-24 (2022-23: Nil).

**Bonuses**

There were no bonuses accrued or paid in 2023-24 (2022-23: Nil).

**Fair pay disclosure (subject to audit)**

Reporting bodies are required to disclose the relationship between the remuneration of the highest-paid director in their organisation and the lower quartile, median and upper quartile remuneration of the organisation’s workforce.

The banded remuneration of the highest-paid employee/Accounting Officer in the financial year 2023-24 was £80-£85k (2022-23: £80-85k) no change. The only paid Board Member, the Chair was £10-15k (2022-23: £5-10k).

The relationship between the mid-point of this band and the remuneration of the organisation’s workforce is disclosed below (pay ratio rounded to 1 decimal point);

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **2023-24** |  |  | **2022-23** |
|  | **25th percentile** | **Median** | **75th percentile** | **25th percentile** | **Median** | **75th percentile** |
|  | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| **Total remuneration** | 29,258 | 34,011 | 43,191 | 26,575 | 32,893 | 42,639 |
| **Pay ratio** | 2.9:1 | 2.5:1 | 2:1 | 3.1:1 | 2.5:1 | 2:1 |

Total remuneration includes salary, non-consolidated performance-related pay and benefits-in-kind. It does not include severance payments, employer pension contributions and the cash equivalent transfer value of pensions.

For 2023-24, the 25th percentile, median and 75th percentile remuneration values consisted solely of salary payments.

In 2023-24, no employees received remuneration more than the highest paid director (2022-23: no employees).

Remuneration ranged from £10,552 to £85-90k (2022-23: £10,000 to £80-85k)

There has been an overall reduction in the current financial year’s pay ratios compared to the pay ratios of the previous financial year. The 25th percentile decreased by 0.2. These reductions are primarily attributable to the pay award re 2023-24 not being made in the financial year and thus impacted the pay and benefits of the organisations’ employees taken as a whole.  
  
Had the pay award been paid in 2023-24 we believe the median pay ratio would have been consistent with the pay, reward and progression policies for the organisations’ employees taken as a whole.

**Percentage Change in Remuneration (subject to audit)**

Reporting bodies are also required to disclose the percentage change from the previous financial year in:

* salary and allowances; and
* performance pay and bonuses of the highest paid director and of their employees as a whole.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **2023-24 v**  **2022-23** |
| **Percentage change for:** | **£** |
|  |  |
| Average employee salary and allowances | 3.55% |
|  |  |
| Highest paid director’s salary and allowances | 1.6% |

**Northern Ireland Screen Pensions**

The company operated the NILGOSC pension scheme at the end of the year effective from 1 April 2013. This is a funded scheme which provides benefits on a “Career Average Revalued Earnings” basis at a normal retirement age of 65. Benefits accrue at the rate of 1/49th of pensionable salary for each year of service. In addition, a tax-free lump sum may be payable on retirement. Members pay contributions of between 3.25% and 8.5% of pensionable earnings.

The NILGOSC scheme is a multi-employer defined benefit scheme which provides members of participating employers with the benefits related to pay and services at rates which are defined under statutory regulations. To finance these benefits assets are accumulated in the scheme and are held separately from the assets of the employers. The scheme is funded by employers participating in the NILGOSC scheme who pay contributions at rates determined by an independent professionally qualified actuary on the basis of regular valuations using the project unit method.

**2023-24 2022-23**

£ £

Employer’s Contribution 0.331m 0.310m

**Pension Benefits (subject to audit)**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Accrued pension at pension age as at 31 March 2024 and related lump sum**  **£000** | **Real increase in pension and related lump sum at pension age**  **£000** | **CETV at 31 March 2023**  **£000** | **CETV at 31 March 2024**  **£000** | **Real increase in CETV**  **£000** |
| Richard Williams  *Chief Executive* | 30 - 35 and no lump sum | (0 - 2.5) and no lump sum | 424\* | 482 | 22.5 |

**\*Due to factor changes the pay and pension disclosure has been re-run for YE 2023 therefore figures provided in the previous columns might slightly differ to what was reported last year.**

**Cash Equivalent Transfer Values**

A Cash Equivalent Transfer Value (CETV) is the actuarially assessed capitalised value of the pension scheme benefits accrued by a member at a particular point in time. The benefits valued are the member’s accrued benefits and any contingent spouse’s pension payable from the scheme. A CETV is a payment made by a pension scheme or arrangement to secure pension benefits in another pension scheme or arrangement when the member leaves a scheme and chooses to transfer the benefits accrued in their former scheme.

The pension figures shown relate to the benefits that the individual has accrued as a consequence of their total membership of the pension scheme, not just their service in a senior capacity to which disclosure applies.

The CETV figures, and from 2003-04 the other pension details, include the value of any pension benefit in another scheme or arrangement which the individual has transferred to the pension arrangements. They also include any additional pension benefit accrued to the member as a result of their purchasing additional years of pension service in the scheme at their own cost. CETVs are calculated in accordance with The Occupational Pension Schemes (Transfer Values) (Amendment) Regulations and do not take account of any actual or potential benefits resulting from Lifetime Allowance Tax which may be due when pension benefits are taken.

**Real increase in CETV**

This reflects the increase in CETV effectively funded by the employer. It does not include the increase in accrued pension due to inflation, contributions paid by the employee (including the value of any benefits transferred from another pension scheme or arrangement) and uses common market valuation factors for the start and end of the period.

**Exit Packages (subject to audit)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024** | | **2023** | |
| **Exit Package Cost Band** | **Number of Compulsory Redundancies** | **Number of Other Departures Agreed** | **Number of Compulsory Redundancies** | **Number of Other Departures Agreed** |
| £50,000 - £100,000\* | - | 1 | - | - |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total Cost** | - | £79,627 | - | - |

\*Special severance payment paid as agreed with Northern Ireland Screen board and with approval of Department of Finance (DoF).

**Staff costs (subject to audit)**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Payroll Staff 2023-24** | **Agency Staff 2023-24** | **2023-24 Total** | **2022-23 Total as restated** |
| **Administrative** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Salaries | 1,917,853 | 14,687 | 1,932,540 | 1,651,149 |
| Social security costs | 215,444 | - | 215,444 | 172,777 |
| Other pension costs | 349,128 | - | 349,128 | 309,573 |
| Administrative Total Costs | 2,482,425 | 14,687 | 2,497,112 | 2,133,499 |
| **Programme** |  |  |  |  |
| Salaries | 3,052,338 | - | 3,052,338 | 2,131,397 |
| Social security costs | 251,143 | - | 251,143 | 169,936 |
| Other pension costs | 67,844 | - | 67,844 | 42,283 |
| Programme Total Costs | 3,371,325 | - | 3,371,325 | 2,343,616 |
| **Total Staff Costs** | **5,853,750** | **14,687** | **5,868,437** | **4,477,115** |

**The average number of persons employed (subject to audit)**

The average number of Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) persons employed during the year was as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2023-24** | | | **2022-23** | | |
| **Information on People** | **Male** | **Female** | **Total** | **Male** | **Female** | **Total** |
| **Directors** | **1** |  |  | 1 | - | 1 |
| Number of Permanent Employees\* | 16 | 27 | 43 | 17 | 30 | 47 |
| Temporary staff / external secondees\*\* | 79 | 60 | 139 | 68 | 55 | 123 |
| Total | 96 | 87 | 182 | 86 | 85 | 171 |

*\*Core employees comprise the core workforce from Grade 5 to Grade AA.*

*\*\*External secondees are defined as trainees employed by Northern Ireland Screen via the number of industry-related employability schemes offered.*

**Sickness absence**

Annual sickness absence figures can be found in the “Sickness Absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service 2022/23 report at Sickness Absence in the Northern Ireland Civil Service 2022/23 | Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA). For Northern Ireland Screen the sickness absence rate for the year 2023-24 was 0.84% (2022-23: 4.1%).

**Staff Turnover**

The staff turnover rate for the year 2023-24 was 61.3% (2022-23: 51%).  Turnover for core staff for 2023-24 is 4.3% and trainees is 57.1%. The high turnover is primarily due to short-term contracts for trainees which typically range from 6 months to 24 months.

**Staff Engagement**

The staff Engagement committee continues to provide recommendations for improvements to the Senior Management Team and have organised various events for all staff to attend.   A Staff engagement survey has also been carried out with an 81% response rate and an engagement score of 72%.  Following the survey an action plan is being put together to address concerns raised.

**Employment, training and advancement of disabled persons**

Northern Ireland Screen is committed to working towards creating a truly inclusive workplace where all colleagues feel valued. Northern Ireland Screen applies the recruitment principles as set out in the Recruitment Code of the Civil Service Commissioners for Northern Ireland, appointing candidates based on merit through fair and open competition. Mandatory training for recruitment and selection panel members includes raising awareness of unconscious bias. Unconscious bias training is available to all staff. Through CINE Northern Ireland Screen undertakes outreach activities to promote career opportunities to the disability sector.

**Learning & Development**

Northern Ireland Screen recognises the importance of having skilled and engaged employees and continues to invest in learning and development. Development and delivery of generic staff training generally through the Centre for Applied Learning Training is delivered using a variety of learning delivery channels (including on-line, webinars), providing flexible access to learning. Coherent learning pathways are aligned to both corporate need and the specific

requirements of Northern Ireland Screen. Talent management is a key theme of our Strategy to deliver “Stories, Skills and Sustainability 2022-26” and this year the focus continued on promoting the importance of improving our awareness of disability and diversity issues. The DoF is responsible for the NICS Industrial Relations Policy.

**Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

In Northern Ireland Screen, we are committed to building an inclusive workplace culture where diversity is truly valued at all levels, where you are valued for who you are and where you can bring your true self to work. We want to make use of all the talent that exists across the NICS to organisation.

As a key element of the new Strategy, our ambitious diversity and inclusion programme of work is delivered largely through CINE and our Diversity Action Plan. The Plan sets out our priorities for action by diversity and inclusion theme, and includes supporting plans on communications and outreach. Equality is a cornerstone consideration in the development and review of all HR policies which determine how staff are recruited and appointed, their terms and conditions, how they are managed and developed, assessed, recognised and rewarded.

Northern Ireland Screen continues to meet its statutory obligations under the Fair Employment & Treatment (NI) Order 1998, which includes submission of an annual Fair Employment Monitoring Return and a tri-annual Article 55 Review to the Equality Commission for NI (ECNI), both of which assess the composition of the workforce and the

composition of applicants and appointees. Northern Ireland Screen uses the findings of all the equality monitoring and analysis to inform its programme of targeted outreach activity to address any areas of under-representation. As a public body, Northern Ireland Screen has due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to the desirability of promoting good relations across a range of categories outlined in the Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 in carrying out its functions.

**Off-payroll payments and other matters**

There were no off-payroll payments in year.

There were no disclosures required under:

* Health and safety at work;
* Trade union relationships;
* Human capital management such as career management and employability, pay policy etc.

According to our Equal Opportunity Statement of Policy, Northern Ireland Screen will provide equal opportunity for all job applicants and workers. All recruitment, promotion, training and receipt of any other benefit will be based upon an individual’s ability and job performance and will exclude any consideration of an applicant’s/worker’s religious beliefs, political opinion, gender, sexual orientation, marital or civil partnership status, race, age, disability, having or not having dependants, trade union membership or non-membership or being a part time worker.

Northern Ireland Screen will not directly or indirectly discriminate on the grounds of religious belief or political opinion.

Northern Ireland Screen will continue to promote more sustainable and efficient products and services with the aim of achieving the best long-term, overall value for money for society.

**Expenditure on consultancy**

There was £9,587 expenditure on consultancy made during 2023-24 (2022-23: Nil)

**Assembly Accountability and Audit Report: (these sections are subject to audit)**

**Losses and special payments *which require disclosure*.**

**Statement of Losses and Special Payments**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024** | | **2023** | |
|  | **Number** | **£** | **Number** | **£** |
| ***Special Payments*** |  |  |  |  |
| *Special severance payment* | 1 | 79,627 | - | - |
|  | 1 | 79,627 | - | - |

**Remote Contingent Liabilities**

Northern Ireland Screen has several staff members who could be impacted by the McCloud judgement. Northern Ireland Screen’s solicitor is reviewing this matter however it is deemed a remote contingent liability as the likelihood of a transfer of economic benefit in settlement is too remote to meet the definition of a contingent liability (2022-23: £Nil). Contingent liabilities are disclosed in note 20 of the financial statements.

**Fees and charges**

There were no fees and charges during 2023‑24 (2022‑23: Nil).

**Regularity of expenditure.**

All expenditure during 2023-24 has been in line with Managing Public Money NI (MPMNI).



**Richard Williams**

**Richard Williams**

**24th September 2024**

**NORTHERN IRELAND SCREEN COMMISSION**

**THE CERTIFICATE AND REPORT OF THE COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL TO THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY**

**Opinion on financial statements**

I certify that I have audited the financial statements of the Northern Ireland Screen Commission for the year ended 31 March 2024 under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013. The financial statements comprise: the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure, the Statement of Financial Position, the Statement of Cash Flows, the Statement of Changes in Taxpayers’ Equity and the related notes, including significant accounting policies. The financial reporting framework that has been applied in the preparation of the Northern Ireland Screen Commission financial statements is applicable law and the UK adopted international accounting standards.

I have also audited the information in the Accountability Report that is described in that report as having been audited.

In my opinion the financial statements:

* give a true and fair view of the state of Northern Ireland Screen Commission’s affairs as at 31 March 2024 and of its net income for the year then ended; and
* have been properly prepared in accordance with the UK adopted international accounting standards and the Companies Act 2006.

**Opinion on regularity**

In my opinion, in all material respects the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

**Basis for opinions**

I conducted my audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISAs) (UK), applicable law and Practice Note 10 ‘Audit of Financial Statements and Regularity of Public Sector Bodies in the United Kingdom’. My responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements section of my certificate.

My staff and I are independent of the Northern Ireland Screen Commission in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to my audit of the financial statements in the UK, including the Financial Reporting Council’s Ethical Standard, and have fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with these requirements.

I believe that the audit evidence obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my opinions.

**Conclusions relating to going concern**

In auditing the financial statements, I have concluded that the Northern Ireland Screen Commission’s use of the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements is appropriate.

Based on the work I have performed, I have not identified any material uncertainties relating to events or conditions that, individually or collectively, may cast significant doubt on the Northern Ireland Screen Commission's ability to continue as a going concern for a period of at least twelve months from when the financial statements are authorised for issue.

The going concern basis of accounting for the Northern Ireland Screen Commission is adopted in consideration of the requirements set out in the Government Financial Reporting Manual, which require entities to adopt the going concern basis of accounting in the preparation of the financial statements where it anticipated that the services which they provide will continue into the future.

My responsibilities and the responsibilities of the directors and the Accounting Officer with respect to going concern are described in the relevant sections of this certificate.

**Other Information**

The other information comprises the information included in the Annual Report other than the financial statements, the parts of the Accountability Report described in that report as having been audited, and my audit certificate and report. The directors and the Accounting Officer are responsible for the other information included in the annual report. My opinion on the financial statements does not cover the other information and except to the extent otherwise explicitly stated in my report I do not express any form of assurance conclusion thereon.

My responsibility is to read the other information and, in doing so, consider whether the other information is materially inconsistent with the financial statements or my knowledge obtained in the audit or otherwise appears to be materially misstated. If I identify such material inconsistencies or apparent material misstatements, I am required to determine whether this gives rise to a material misstatement in the financial statements themselves. If, based on the work I have performed, I conclude that there is a material misstatement of this other information, I am required to report that fact.

I have nothing to report in this regard.

**Opinion on other matters**

In my opinion:

* the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited have been properly prepared in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual and directions made under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013;
* the information given in the Performance Report and Directors’ Report for the financial year for which the financial statements are prepared is consistent with the financial statements; and
* the Performance Report and Directors’ Report have been prepared in accordance with applicable legal requirements.

**Matters on which I report by exception**

In the light of the knowledge and understanding of the Northern Ireland Screen Commission and its environment obtained in the course of the audit, I have not identified material misstatements in the Performance Report and Directors’ Report.

I have nothing to report in respect of the following matters which I report to you if, in my opinion:

* adequate accounting records have not been kept; or
* the financial statements and the parts of the Accountability Report to be audited are not in agreement with the accounting records; or
* certain disclosures of remuneration specified by law are not made; or
* I have not received all of the information and explanations I require for my audit; or
* the Governance Statement does not reflect compliance with the Department of Finance’s guidance.

**Responsibilities of the directors and Accounting Officer for the financial statements**

As explained more fully in the Statement of Directors and Accounting Officer Responsibilities, the directors and the Accounting Officer are responsible for:

* preparing the Annual Report, which includes the Directors’ Remuneration Report, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006;
* the preparation of the financial statements, in accordance with the Companies Act 2006 and for being satisfied that they give a true and fair view;
* ensuring such internal controls are in place as deemed necessary to enable the preparation of financial statements to be free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; and
* assessing the Northern Ireland Screen Commission’s ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the Accounting Officer anticipates that the services provided by the Northern Ireland Screen Commission will not continue to be provided in the future.

**Auditor’s responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements**

My responsibility is to examine, certify and report on the financial statements in accordance with the Companies (Public Sector Audit) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013.

My objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements as a whole are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error and to issue a certificate that includes my opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with ISAs (UK) will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of these financial statements.

I design procedures in line with my responsibilities, outlined above, to detect material misstatements in respect of non-compliance with laws and regulation, including fraud.

My procedures included:

* obtaining an understanding of the legal and regulatory framework applicable to the Northern Ireland Screen Commission through discussion with management and application of extensive public sector accountability knowledge. The key laws and regulations I considered included the Companies Act 2006 and relevant tax laws;
* making enquires of management and those charged with governance on the Northern Ireland Screens Commission’s compliance with laws and regulations;
* making enquiries of internal audit, management and those charged with governance as to susceptibility to irregularity and fraud, their assessment of the risk of material misstatement due to fraud and irregularity, and their knowledge of actual, suspected and alleged fraud and irregularity;
* completing risk assessment procedures to assess the susceptibility of the Northern Ireland Screen Commission’s financial statements to material misstatement, including how fraud might occur. This included, but was not limited to, an engagement director led engagement team discussion on fraud to identify particular areas, transaction streams and business practices that may be susceptible to material misstatement due to fraud. As part of this discussion, I identified potential for fraud in the following areas: revenue recognition, posting of unusual journals and unreasonable management estimates;
* engagement director oversight to ensure the engagement team collectively had the appropriate competence, capabilities and skills to identify or recognise non-compliance with the applicable legal and regulatory framework throughout the audit;
* documenting and evaluating the design and implementation of internal controls in place to mitigate risk of material misstatement due to fraud and non-compliance with laws and regulations;
* designing audit procedures to address specific laws and regulations which the engagement team considered to have a direct material effect on the financial statements in terms of misstatement and irregularity, including fraud. These audit procedures included, but were not limited to, reading board and committee minutes, and agreeing financial statement disclosures to underlying supporting documentation and approvals as appropriate;
* addressing the risk of fraud as a result of management override of controls by:
  + performing analytical procedures to identify unusual or unexpected relationships or movements;
  + testing journal entries to identify potential anomalies, and inappropriate or unauthorised adjustments;
  + assessing whether judgements and other assumptions made in determining accounting estimates were indicative of potential bias; and
  + investigating significant or unusual transactions made outside of the normal course of business.

A further description of my responsibilities for the audit of the financial statements is located on the Financial Reporting Council’s website [www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities](http://www.frc.org.uk/auditorsresponsibilities). This description forms part of my certificate.

In addition, I am required to obtain evidence sufficient to give reasonable assurance that the expenditure and income recorded in the financial statements have been applied to the purposes intended by the Assembly and the financial transactions recorded in the financial statements conform to the authorities which govern them.

**Report**

I have no observations to make on these financial statements.

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*Dorinnia Carville*

*Comptroller and Auditor General*

*Northern Ireland Audit Office*

*106 University Street*

*BELFAST*

*BT7 1EU*

*18 October 2024*

**Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure**

**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Note** | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| **Income** |  |  |  |
| Income from activities | **4** | 30,187,908 | 26,248,298 |
| Other income | **4** | 189,000 | 108,000 |
|  |  | 30,376,908 | 26,356,298 |
| **Expenditure** |  |  |  |
| Staff costs | **7** | (5,868,437) | (4,477,115) |
| Depreciation  Lease Interest Costs | **5**  **5** | (342,446)  (6,499) | (333,526)  (8,961) |
| Other expenditure | **5** | (467,313) | (827,023) |
| Programme expenses | **6** | (23,170,026) | (23,215,593) |
|  |  | (29,854,721) | (28,862,218) |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |
| **Net income/(expenditure) for the year** |  | **522,187** | **(2,505,920)** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure** |  |  |  |
| Actuarial gain/loss | **17** | 48,000 | 1,930,000 |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Total Comprehensive Income/**  **(expenditure) for the year** |  | **570,187** | **(575,920)** |
|  |  |  |  |

The notes on pages 54 to 76 form part of these financial statements

**Statement of Financial Position**

**as at 31 March 2024**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  |  | **Note** | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| **Non-current assets**  Property, plant and equipment - Tangible  Property, plant and equipment - Intangible |  |  | **8**  **8.1** | 555,506  - | 846,345  12,928 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Current assets**  Trade and other receivables  Cash and cash equivalents |  |  | **9**  **10** | 450,390  1,401,591 | 538,782  986,536 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total current assets** |  |  |  | 1,851,981 | 1,525,318 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total assets** |  |  |  | **2,407,487** | **2,384,591** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Current liabilities**  Trade and other payables  **Total current liabilities** |  |  | **11** | (1,483,649)  **(1,483,649)** | (1,771,567)  **(1,771,567)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Total assets less current liabilities** |  |  |  | **923,838** | **613,024** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Non-current liabilities** |  |  |  |  |  |
| Retirement benefit obligation  Lease liabilities non-current |  |  | **17**  **11.1** | -  (198,118) | (35,000)  (422,491) |
| **Total non-current liabilities** |  |  |  | (198,118) | (457,491) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Net assets/(liabilities)** |  |  |  | **725,720** | **155,533** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Taxpayers’ equity**  General fund |  |  |  | 725,720 | 155,533 |
| **Total taxpayers’ equity** |  |  |  | **725,720** | **155,533** |

The notes on pages 54 to 76 form part of these financial statements.

These financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Government Financial Reporting Manual 2023-24 (FReM).

It is the view of the Board that an exemption from the audit requirements of Part 16 of the Companies Act 2006 is available under Section 482 of that Act, since the company meets the Department of Finance’s definition of a non-profit making company and is subject to a public-sector audit under the Companies (Public Sector Audit) (Northern Ireland) Order 2013, being an order issued under Article 5(3) of the Audit and Accountability (Northern Ireland) Order 2003. The Board therefore claims this exemption. The Directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and preparation of accounts.

The financial statements on pages 50 to 76 were approved by the Board on date and were signed on its behalf by:

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CARMEL MULLAN, DIRECTOR 24th September 2024

**Statement of Cash Flows**

**for the year ended 31 March 2024**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Note** | **2024** | **2023** |
|  |  | **£** | **£** |
| **Cash flows from operating activities** |  |  |  |
| Net income/(expenditure) for the year |  | 522,187 | (2,505,920) |
| Adjustment for non-cash transactions | **5+6** | 355,446 | 745,487 |
| (Increase)/decrease in trade and other receivables | **9** | 88,392 | 1,862,281 |
| less movements in receivables relating to items not passing through SoCNE | **9** | (7,673) | 69,818 |
| Increase/(Decrease) in trade and other payables | **11** | (512,291) | 315,575 |
| less movements in payables relating to items not passing through SoCNE |  | 261,631 | (684,123) |
| Decrease in provision | **19** | - | (175,000) |
| ***Net cash outflow from operating activities*** |  | **707,692** | **(371,882)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Cash flows from investing activities** |  |  |  |
| Purchase of property, plant and equipment | **8** | (38,679) | (60,915) |
| ***Net cash outflow from investing activities*** |  | **(38,679)** | **(60,915)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Cashflow from financing activities** |  |  |  |
| Capital element of payments in respect of finance leases |  | (253,958) | (332,301) |
| ***Net Financing*** |  | **(253,958)** | **(332,301)** |
|  |  |  |  |
| ***Net increase/(decrease) in cash and cash equivalents in the period*** |  | 415,055 | (765,098) |
|  |  |  |  |
| Net increase in cash and cash equivalents in the period |  | 415,055 | (765,098) |
| Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of the year | 10 | 986,536 | 1,751,635 |
| Cash and cash equivalents at end of the year | 10 | 1,401,591 | 986,536 |

The notes on pages 54 to 76 form part of these financial statements.

**Statement of Changes in Taxpayers’ Equity**

**For the year ended 31 March 2024**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  |  | **Note** | **General fund** | |  |  |  | **£** | |  |  |  |  | | **Balance at 31March 2022** | |  | **748,893** | |  | | Adjustment for implementation IFRS 16 | |  | (17,440) |  | | Net Income/expenditure (excluding auditors remuneration) | |  | (2,488,920) |  | | Auditors Remuneration | | **3** | (17,000) |  | | Actuarial gain | |  | 1,930,000 |  | | Total changes in tax payer’s equity for the year | |  | **155,533** |  | |  | |  |  |  | |  | |  |  |  | | **Balance at 31 March 2023** | |  | **155,533** |  | | | | | | |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| **Balance at 31 March 2023** | |  | **155,533** |
|  |
| Net Income/expenditure (excluding auditors remuneration) | |  | 540,087 |  |
| Auditors Remuneration | | **3** | (17,900) |  |
| Actuarial gain | |  | 48,000 |  |
| Total changes in tax payer’s equity for the year | |  | **570,187** |  |
|  | |  |  |  |
|  | |  |  |  |
| **Balance at 31March 2024** | |  | **725,720** |  |

The notes on pages 54 to 76 form part of these financial statements.

1. **Statement of accounting policies**

Northern Ireland Screen was incorporated in the United Kingdom as a Private Limited Company by guarantee without share capital use of ‘Limited’ exemption. Registered office address is 3rd Floor, Alfred House, 21 Alfred Street, Belfast, BT2 8ED.

Principal activities include;

* Support the development of the screen industry in Northern Ireland including development and production funding, funding for training and the support of marketing activity;
* Development and support of the infrastructure underpinning the screen industry in Northern Ireland;
* Provide company development support initiatives for local production companies;
* Provide skills development/training for the industry;
* Provide support for the cultural aspects of the screen industry in Northern Ireland including audience development, screen festivals and cultural cinema;
* Support all aspects of preservation of and access to screen archive and audio-visual heritage; and
* Development of moving image and digital education provision.

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the 2023-24 Government Financial Reporting Manual (FReM). The accounting policies contained in the FReM apply International Financial Reporting Standards as adapted or interpreted for the public-sector context. Where the FReM permits a choice of accounting policy, the accounting policy which is judged to be most appropriate to the particular circumstances of Northern Ireland Screen for the purpose of giving a true and fair view has been selected. See note 24 for additional disclosures required to comply with FReM.

Northern Ireland Screen have departed from FReM for non DfE and DfC funds which are accounted for under Government Grants. There is a departure from FReM recognising Grant in Aid income in the statement of comprehensive net expenditure instead of directly to the Statement of changes in tax payers equity to ensure compliance with the Companies Act 2006.

The particular policies adopted by Northern Ireland Screen for each income stream are described below in note 2 and have been applied consistently.

* 1. **Accounting convention**

The financial statements are prepared under the historical cost convention to account for the revaluation of property, plant and equipment, intangible assets and certain financial assets and liabilities.

The Accounts are stated in sterling (£), which is the Northern Ireland Screen’s functional and presentational currency and rounded to the nearest £1.

* 1. **Property, plant and equipment**

Property, plant and equipment are at valuation and deemed valuation is depreciated historical cost as proxy value as assets have a short useful life.

Depreciation is provided at rates calculated to write off the cost less residual value of each asset over its expected useful life, as follows:

Computer and TV equipment 33.3% reducing balance

Intangible Assets 33.3% straight line

Vehicles 33.3% straight line

Fixtures and fittings 25% reducing balance

Office equipment 25% reducing balance

Production Equipment 50% straight line/life of lease

Property Leases are depreciated based on the total number of months of the lease.

* 1. **Leases**

Accounting for leases under IFRS 16 (2022/23)

At the commencement of a lease (or the IFRS 16 transition date, if later), Northern Ireland Screen recognises a right-of-use asset and a lease liability. The lease liability is measured at the payments for the remaining lease term, net of irrecoverable value added tax, discounted either by the rate implicit in the lease, or, where this cannot be determined, the rate advised by HM Treasury at the time of recognition (0.95% for 2022) to work out the Net Present Value (NPV). The payments included in the liability are those that are fixed or in-substance fixed. The incremental cost of borrowing is the rate advised by HM Treasury at the time of recognition (0.95% for 2022).

* 1. **Programme Expenditure**

Expenditure on film production is recognised on the basis of applications for payment or invoices received in the year, from funded projects. Any authorised recoupment must be reinvested in the fund within the financial year. Northern Ireland Screen does not retain ownership of the recoupment.

Programme expenditure are recognised once the conditions of the contract are made and there is an obligation from Northern Ireland Screen to make the payment for program expenses.

* 1. **Pensions**

The company was part of the NILGOSC (Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee) pension scheme, effective from 1st April 2013. NILGOSC is a final salary contracted out occupational pension scheme. The pension costs charged in the financial statements represent the contributions payable by the company during the year. The pension costs are assessed in accordance with the advice of an independent qualified actuary using the market led approach. The last full actuarial valuation of the scheme occurred on 1st April 2022. The latest actuarial valuations of the scheme were at 31 March 2024.

Pension scheme assets are measured using the market value. Pension scheme liabilities are measured using the projected unit credit method and discounted at the current rate of return on a high-quality corporate bond of equivalent term to the liability. Actuarial gains and losses are recognised in Other Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

* 1. **Critical accounting judgments and estimates**

The preparation of financial statements in conformity with IFRS requires the use of accounting estimates and assumptions. It also requires management to exercise its judgement in the process of applying Northern Ireland Screen’s accounting policies. Management continually evaluate their estimates, assumptions and judgements based on available information and experience. As the use of estimates is inherent in financial reporting, actual results could differ from these estimates. Key accounting estimates include accrued expenses, depreciation and pension liability.

* 1. **IFRS 16 implementation**

Northern Ireland Screen adopted IFRS 16 Leases in 2022-23. IFRS 16 represented a significant change in lessee accounting by largely removing the distinction between operating and finance leases and introducing a single lessee accounting model. A lessee is required to capitalise assets and liabilities for all leases, unless they qualify for low value or short-term exemptions. In addition, there are updated disclosure requirements.

Northern Ireland Screen has two property leases. One for its main Headquarters in Alfred House and the second in the Ormeau Baths, the Pixel Mill.

**1.7 Operating segments**

IFRS 8 Operating Segments requires an entity to report financial and descriptive information about its reportable segments, which are operating segments or accumulations of operating segments.  These are components about which separate financial information is available that is evaluated regularly by the chief operating decision maker in deciding how to allocate resources and in addressing performance.  Due to the size and nature of Northern Ireland Screen, it is managed as a single segment, with all staff contributing to the organisation’s overall performance.  As such, performance is not disaggregated for evaluation by the chief operating decision maker and so performance has not been disaggregated by operating segment in these financial statements.

**1.8 Accounting standards, interpretations and amendments to published Standards not yet effective**

There were no new standards adopted in the year that would have a material impact on the accounts.

**1.9 Financial instruments**

As the cash requirements of Northern Ireland Screen are met through grants from DfE, DfC and other grant funding bodies, financial instruments play a more limited role in creating risk than would apply to a non-public body of a similar size. The majority of financial instruments relate to contracts to buy non-financial items in line with Northern Ireland Screen’s expected purchase and usage requirements and therefore Northern Ireland Screen is exposed to little credit, liquidity or market risk.

**Trade and other receivables**

Financial assets within trade and other receivables are initially recognised at fair value, which is usually the original invoiced amount and subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method less provision for doubtful receivables. Provisions are made specifically where there is objective evidence of a dispute or inability to pay.

**Cash and cash equivalents**

Cash and cash equivalents comprise of cash in hand and current balances with banks which are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and which are subject to insignificant risk of changes in value and have an original maturity of three months or less.

For the purposes of the Consolidated Statement of Cash Flows, cash and cash equivalents are defined above net of outstanding bank overdrafts.

**Trade and other payables**

Financial liabilities within trade and other payables are initially recognised at fair value, which is usually the original invoiced amount and subsequently carried at amortised cost using the effective interest rate method.

**1.10 Going concern**

DfE Northern Ireland Screen sponsor department have confirmed the 2024-25 budget position.  Planned Screen Fund and Skills activities for 2024-25 have been formulated in line with the funding levels in the economic appraisal.  The agreed future financing of any Northern Ireland Screen liabilities is expected to be met by DfE.

It is considered appropriate to adopt a going concern basis for the preparation of the financial statements as the DfE, sponsor department of Northern Ireland Screen, is supply financed. There is no reason to believe that the Department’s future sponsorship and future Assembly approval will not be forthcoming to meet Northern Ireland Screen’s liabilities as they fall due.

1. **Income Recognition**

Northern Ireland Screen recognises income as follows;

**Grant In Aid**

Income received from DfE[[1]](#footnote-2) and DfC[[2]](#footnote-3) is recognised as Grant-in-aid which is provided to match the Northern Ireland Screens cash needs and is accounted for on a cash basis.

**Grant Income**

Grant income from funders DCMS[[3]](#footnote-4) for ILBF[[4]](#footnote-5) and USBF[[5]](#footnote-6), TCAGSM[[6]](#footnote-7), Lottery Arts Council and BFI[[7]](#footnote-8) are generally drawn down in advance to ensure prompt settlement of anticipated claims and expenditure. The expenditure may therefore not be incurred in the same accounting period that the funds are received. The directors consider that recognising income on a cash basis would result in the recognition of a surplus in the period of receipt, and a deficit when the related expenditure is incurred, which would not give a true and fair view of the underlying activities and performance for those periods.

Grants for revenue purposes are credited to deferred income and released to the statement of comprehensive net income/expenditure as the related expenditure is incurred.

**Company Contribution Income**

Income from companies where trainees are placed and the company bears 50% of the cost is treated as a vatable sale and the amounts are stated net of VAT. This revenue is recognised over the time the services are rendered on an agreed rate with the company. Company contribution income is included in the various funding income category.

**Recoupment Income**

In line with IFRS 15 income in relation to recoupment is included in the accounts at the point it becomes receivable. Recoupment is returns from conditional grants/investments made through the Screen Fund. This is not across all contracts and each contract will have their own express details on whether recoupment is applicable and the specified %. Due to the unpredictable nature of projects and whether they will be successful it is difficult to predict estimated recoupment income for a project. Recoupment income is recognised on receipt of a statement of account from the company or when the payment is received in the bank where no statement is provided. Northern Ireland Screen has the authority to retain up to £500,000 in line with the MSFM or with the approval of the Department can apply to retain in excess of this value. In 2023-24 Northern Ireland Screen were granted permission to retain £890,000.

1. **Net expenditure for the year is stated after charging:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
|  |  |  |
| Depreciation of property, plant and equipment | 342,446 | 333,526 |
| Payments under operating leases | - | - |
| Fees payable to the company’s auditor for the audit of the company’s annual accounts | 17,900 | 17,000 |
|  |  |  |

Note

Northern Ireland Screen’s financial audit is carried out by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) on behalf of the Comptroller and Auditor General.

1. **Income and Other income**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Funding Income |  |  |
|  |  |  |
| Department for Communities | 1,607,000 | 1,871,000 |
| Department for the Economy  DfE Recoupment | 19,523,000  974,993 | 16,292,000  466,181 |
| Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) ILBF  [TCAGSM](https://www.bing.com/ck/a?!&&p=99b8ce96790fdaaeJmltdHM9MTY2MzU0NTYwMCZpZ3VpZD0zOTNhZTgxNS04NzQzLTY4YzktMzc0Mi1mOTQ3ODYwZTY5NmEmaW5zaWQ9NTQxMg&ptn=3&hsh=3&fclid=393ae815-8743-68c9-3742-f947860e696a&u=a1aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuZ292LmllL2VuL29yZ2FuaXNhdGlvbi9kZXBhcnRtZW50LW9mLXRvdXJpc20tY3VsdHVyZS1hcnRzLWdhZWx0YWNodC1zcG9ydC1hbmQtbWVkaWEv&ntb=1)  DCMS – BFI – USBF | 3,178,000  847,387  1,059,000 | 3,150,440  845,166  1,867,102 |
| BFI | 160,000 | 214,443 |
| Arts Council (Lottery)  CINES | 106,204  1,816,479 | 244,052  604,141 |
| Various funding Income  BFI Skills Cluster  Other Recoupment | 626,216  237,702  51,927 | 693,773  -  - |
|  | 30,187,908 | 26,248,298 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Other Income | **2024**  **£** | | **2023**  **£** |
| Pension Interest | 189,000 | 108,000 | |
|  |  | |  |
| Total income | 30,376,908 | | 26,356,298 |

1. **Administrative expenses**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Staff Costs | 5,868,437 | 4,477,115 |
|  |  |  |
| ***Other expenditure*** |  |  |
| Premises Expenses | 81,909 | 85,939 |
| Office Overheads | 29,358 | 43,428 |
| Pension – Interest Expense | 183,000 | 146,000 |
| Pension – Service Cost  Professional Fees | 19,000  28,015 | 365,000  57,926 |
| Staff and Board Expenses | 126,031 | 128,730 |
| Depreciation  Lease Interest Costs | 467,313  342,446  6,499 | 827,023  333,526  8,961 |
|  |  |  |

1. **Programme expenses**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Northern Ireland Screen Fund  DfE additional funds re DfC shortfall in 2023-24 funding  DfE funding for digital transformation projects  DfE additional funding for skills program | 14,475,964  500,000  145,309  18,834 | 13,931,702  -  -  - |
| Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund | 985,094 | 1,824,996 |
| Skills development | 591,162 | 147,788 |
| Irish Language Broadcast Fund | 3,672,289 | 3,647,494 |
| Department for Communities | 1,351,482 | 1,959,525 |
| Lottery Film Funding Programme | 151,817 | 250,953 |
| Development Activity | 20,000 | 30,148 |
| Production legal fees | 216,967 | 192,389 |
| Marketing and information | 544,003 | 583,733 |
| CINES overheads  BFI – Heritage | 96,347  36,200 | 461,403  - |
| British Film Institute Academy | 151,835 | 154,064 |
| PRONI overheads  Broadcasting Association Ireland  C4  BFI Skills Cluster | -  -  15,000  197,723 | 30,426  972  -  - |
|  | 23,170,026 | 23,215,593 |

1. **Staff Costs**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Payroll Staff 2023-24** | **Agency Staff 2023-24** | **2023-24 Total** | **2022-23 Total As Restated** |
| **Administrative** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| Salaries | 1,917,853 | 14,687 | 1,932,540 | 1,651,149 |
| Social security costs | 215,444 | - | 215,444 | 172,777 |
| Other pension costs | 349,128 | - | 349,128 | 309,573 |
| Administrative Total Costs | 2,482,425 | 14,687 | 2,497,112 | 2,133,499 |
| **Programme** |  |  |  |  |
| Salaries | 3,052,338 | - | 3,052,338 | 2,131,397 |
| Social security costs | 251,143 | - | 251,143 | 169,936 |
| Other pension costs | 67,844 | - | 67,844 | 42,283 |
| Programme Total Costs | 3,371,325 | - | 3,371,325 | 2,343,616 |
| **Total Staff Costs** | **5,853,750** | **14,687** | **5,868,437** | **4,477,115** |

1. **Property, Plant and Equipment – Tangible**

**2023-24**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fixed Assets Schedule** | **Production Vehicle** | **Fixtures & Fittings** | **Office Equipment** | **Computer / TV Equipment** | **Production Equipment** | **HVO Tanks** | **Pixel Mill Property Leases\*** | **Alfred House Property Lease\*** | **Totals** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Cost** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2023 | **£18,576** | **£154,377** | **£42,200** | **£370,250** | **£215,896** | **£21,760** | **£1,451,162** | **£287,621** | £2,561,842 |
| Additions | **£0** | **£1,199** | **£0** | **£37,480** | **£0** | **£0** | **£0** | **£0** | £38,679 |
| As at 31 Mar 2024 | **£18,576** | **£155,576** | **£42,200** | **£407,730** | **£215,896** | **£21,760** | **£1,451,162** | **£287,621** | £2,600,521 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Accumulated Depreciation** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2023 | **£18,576** | **£107,952** | **£40,809** | **£261,597** | **£215,896** | **£0** | **£877,076** | **£193,591** | £1,715,497 |
| Charge for Year | **£0** | **£11,906** | **£348** | **£48,648** | **£0** | **£10,880** | **£191,362** | **£66,374** | £329,518 |
| As at 31 Mar 2024 | **£18,576** | **£119,858** | **£41,157** | **£310,245** | **£215,896** | **£10,880** | **£1,068,438** | **£259,965** | £2,045,015 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Net Book Value** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As at 31 Mar 2024 | **£0** | **£35,718** | **£1,043** | **£97,485** | **£0** | **£10,880** | **£382,724** | **£27,656** | £555,506 |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | **£0** | **£46,425** | **£1,391** | **£108,653** | **£0** | **£21,760** | **£574,086** | **£94,030** | £846,345 |

\*The value of the leases has been calculated in line with the adoption of IFRS 16 and used an NPV for valuation purposes.

**2022-23**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Property, Plant and Equipment Schedule** | **Production Vehicle (£)** | **Fixtures & Fittings (£)** | **Office Equipment (£)** | **Computer / TV Equipment (£)** | **Production Equipment (£)** | **HVO Tanks (£)** | **Pixel Mill Property Leases (£)\*** | **Alfred House Property Lease (£)\*** | **Totals (£)** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Cost** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2022 | 18,576 | 154,377 | 40,453 | 332,842 | 215,896 | - | - | - | 762,144 |
| Additions | - | - | 1,747 | 37,408 | - | 21,760 | 1,451,162 | 287,621 | 1,799,698 |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | 18,576 | 154,377 | 42,200 | 370,250 | 215,896 | 21,760 | 1,451,162 | 287,621 | 2,561,842 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Accumulated Depreciation** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2022 | 18,576 | 92,477 | 40,345 | 208,114 | 215,896 | - | 685,714 | 127,213 | 1,388,355 |
| Charge for Year | - | 15,475 | 464 | 53,483 | - | - | 191,362 | 66,374 | 327,158 |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | 18,576 | 107,952 | 40,809 | 261,597 | 215,896 | - | 877,076 | 193,591 | 1,715,497 |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| **Net Book Value** |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | - | 46,425 | 1,391 | 108,653 | - | 21,760 | 574,086 | 94,030 | 846,345 |
| As at 31 Mar 2022 | - | 61,900 | 108 | 124,728 | - | - | - | - | 186,736 |

* 1. **Property, Plant and Equipment – Intangible**

**2023-24 2022-23**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fixed Assets Schedule** | **Intangible Assets** | **Totals** |
|  |  |  |
| **Cost** |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2023 | **£28,800** | £28,800 |
| Additions | **£0** | £0 |
| As at 31 Mar 2024 | **£28,800** | £28,800 |
|  |  |  |
| **Accumulated Depreciation** |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2023 | **£15,872** | £15,872 |
| Charge for Year | **£12,928** | £12,928 |
| As at 31 Mar 2024 | **£28,800** | £28,800 |
|  |  |  |
| **Net Book Value** |  |  |
| As at 31 Mar 2024 | **£0** | £0 |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | **£12,928** | £12,928 |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Fixed Assets Schedule** | **Intangible Assets** | **Totals** |
|  |  |  |
| **Cost** |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2022 | **£28,800** | £28,800 |
| Additions | **£0** | £0 |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | **£28,800** | £28,800 |
|  |  |  |
| **Accumulated Depreciation** |  |  |
| As at 01 April 2022 | **£9,504** | £9,504 |
| Charge for Year | **£6,368** | £6,368 |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | **£15,872** | £15,872 |
|  |  |  |
| **Net Book Value** |  |  |
| As at 31 Mar 2023 | **£12,928** | £12,928 |
| As at 31 Mar 2022 | **£19,296** | £19,296 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. **Trade and other receivables** |  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Trade receivables  Other Debtors |  | 279,075  72,910 | 312,294  120,409 |
| Grants receivable |  | 32 | 32 |
| Prepayments |  | 98,373 | 106,047 |
|  |  | 450,390 | 538,782 |

1. **Cash and cash equivalents**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| At 01 April |  | 986,536 | 1,751,635 |
|  |  |  |  |
| Net change in cash and cash equivalent balances | | 415,055 | (765,099) |
|  |  |  |  |
| At 31 March |  | 1,401,591 | 986,536 |
|  |  |  |  |
|  |  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Represented by: |  |  |  |
| Cash at bank and in hand |  | 1,401,591 | 986,536 |

Northern Ireland Screen is responsible for distributing Lottery funds under the Lottery Film Funding Programme. Cash and cash equivalents include a balance of funds held by the company for distribution under this programme. As at 31 March 2024 the balance held was £33,774 (2022-23: £65,550). The movement in the Lottery Film Funding Programme is summarised in note 12.

1. **Trade and other payables**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Trade creditors |  | 188,945 | 514,958 |
| Accruals  Deferred Income |  | 690,562  12,580 | 737,090  - |
| Deferred Income – Lottery funds (Note 12)  Other tax and social security  Other Creditors  Lease liability (Current) | | 84,346  261,543  21,299  224,374  1,483,649 | 65,550  187,468  4,869  261,632  1,771,567 |

* 1. **Non-Current Liabilities**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Lease Liability (Non-Current) |  | 198,118 | 422,491 |

1. **Lottery funds (National Lottery Film Funding Programme)**

Northern Ireland Screen is responsible for distributing Lottery funds under the National Lottery Film Funding Programme. A summary of the movement in these funds is shown below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Funds held at start of year | 65,550 | 59,792 |
| Lottery funds received during the year  Balance of 2023-24 funds to be drawn down | 110,042  14,958 | 249,811  - |
| Recoupment Income Received  Awards paid  Funds held at the end of the year | 45,613  (151,817)  84,346 | -  (240,073)  65,550 |
|  |  |  |

1. **Commitments Under Finance leases**

**2022-23**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Buildings** | **Total** |
| **Right-of-use assets** | **(£)** | **(£)** |
| As at 1 April 2022\* | 1,738,783 | 1,738,783 |
| Depreciation Expense | (1,070,667) | (1,070,667) |
| As 31 March 2023 | 668,116 | 668,116 |

\*Northern Ireland Screen adopted IFRS 16 on 1 April 2022 which represented a significant change in lessee accounting by removing the distinction between operating and finance leases and introducing a single lessee accounting model.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2023-24** | **2022-23** |
|  | **(£)** | **(£)** |
| **Buildings** |  |  |
| Not later than one year | 218,282 | 261,070 |
| Later than one year and not later than five years | 187,312 | 405,594 |
| Later than five years | - | - |
| Less interest element | (5,896) | (12,395) |
| Present Value of obligations | 399,698 | 654,269 |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  |
|  | **2023-24** | **2022-23** |
|  | **(£)** | **(£)** |
| **Other** |  |  |
| Not later than one year | - | 3,036 |
| Later than one year and not later than five years | - | - |
| Later than five years | - | - |
| Less interest element | - | (3,036) |
| Present Value of obligations | - | - |

1. **Related party transactions**

Northern Ireland Screen is a Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department for the Economy (DfE). DfE is regarded as a related party. During the year, Northern Ireland Screen Commission had various material transactions with the Department (see note 4).

Directors and key management personnel also declare any interests in successful applications to the Commission and commercial relationships with the Commission.

The following payments were made by Northern Ireland Screen to related party organisations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Name** | **Relationship to Recipient organisation** | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Dog Ears Ltd | Fionnuala Deane | Director | 84,370 | 21,502 |
| DECSM Ltd | Fionnuala Deane | Director | 78,191 | 214,891 |
| CQAF | Susan Picken | Secretary (Formerly Director) | 5,400 | 18,000 |
| Below the Radar | Michael Fanning | Director | 701,278 | 659,774 |
| Puffin Rock Ltd | Fionnula Deane | Director | 15,050 | 18,100 |
| VRNI Ltd | Tom Gray | Director | 8,000 | 10,900 |
| Susan Picken | Susan Picken |  | 1,225 | **-** |
|  |  | **TOTALS** | **893,514** | **943,167** |

The above directors and key management personnel were excluded from decision making in applications made from organisations where a related party relationship existed.

The following payments were made to Northern Ireland Screen from related party organisations.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Organisation** | **Name** | **Relationship to Recipient organisation** | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Humain Ltd | Greg Maguire | Director | 66,939 | 83,318 |
| Dog Ears Ltd | Fionnuala Deane | Director | - | 22,431 |
|  |  | **Total** | **66,939** | **105,749** |

There were no amounts due from or due to the directors or any other related parties as at 31March 2024

(31 March 2023: Nil)

**15 Film award payments**

The company made the following film award payments during the year:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2024**  **£** | **2023**  **£** |
| Lottery | 151,817 | 246,973 |
| Irish Language Broadcast Fund | 3,269,903 | 3,124,395 |
| Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund | 926,476 | 1,725,015 |
| Northern Ireland Screen Fund | 14,475,964 | 13,931,702 |
|  |  |  |
|  | 18,824,160 | 19,028,085 |

**16 Production awards contracted**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Unpaid Contracts as at 01 April 23** | **Contracts Awarded In Year** | **Less De-Committed** | **Contract Payments in Year** | **Unpaid Contracts as at 31 March 24** |
|  | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** | **£** |
| **Lottery** | 159,542 | 180,650 | (8,750) | (151,817) | 179,625 |
| **Northern Ireland Screen Fund** | 9,573,829 | 13,627,983 | (2,645,618) | (14,475,964) | 6,080,230 |
| **Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund** | 601,311 | 1,039,895 | - | (926,476) | 714,730 |
| **Irish Language Broadcast Fund** | 2,175,222 | 3,144,919 | (159,914) | (3,269,903) | 1,890,324 |
|  | **12,509,904** | **17,993,447** | **(2,814,282)** | **(18,824,160)** | **8,865,179** |

Northern Ireland Screen is responsible for distributing Lottery funds under the Lottery Film Funding Programme. The programme is summarised in note 12. The Irish Language Broadcast Fund and the Ulster-Scots Broadcast Fund are funded during the year by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) through BFI.

**17 Retirement benefit obligation**

NILGOSC (Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee) pension scheme was introduced at the end of the 2014 year effective from 1st April 2013. NILGOSC is a final salary contracted out occupational pension scheme. Northern Ireland Screen makes employer contributions to NILGOSC which is a funded scheme of the defined benefit type. The fund is invested in suitable investments, managed by the Committee. For 2023, the contribution rates were 19% for employers and ranging between 3.25% and 8.5% for employees.

Results under IAS 19 can change dramatically depending on market conditions. The defined benefit obligation is linked to yields on AA-rated corporate bonds, while a significant proportion of the assets of the scheme are invested in equities. Changing markets in conjunction with discount rate volatility will lead to volatility in the funded status of the employer’s balance sheet and in Other Comprehensive Income (OCI). It will also lead to volatility in the IAS 19 pension expense in the Statement of Comprehensive Net Expenditure.

The disclosures below relate to the funded liabilities within the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Pension Fund (“the Fund”) which is part of the Local Government Pension Scheme (Northern Ireland) (the “LGPS”). The funded nature of the LGPS requires the employerand its employees to pay contributions into the Fund, calculated at a level intended to balance the retirement benefit obligation with investment assets. The Fund Administering Authority, Northern Ireland Local Government Officers’ Superannuation Committee is responsible for the governance of the Fund.

The employer’s regular contributions to the Fund for the accounting period ending 31 March 2024 are estimated to be £0.331m (31 March 2023 £0.304m).

Additional contributions may also become due in respect of any employer discretions to enhance members’ benefits in the Fund over the next accounting period.

**Results under IAS 19 (LGPS funded benefits)**

**Key Assumptions**

The latest full valuation of the Employer’s LGPS funded benefits took place as at 31March 2024. Liabilities have been estimated by the independent, qualified actuary on an actuarial basis using the projected unit credit method. The principal assumptions used by the actuary in updating the latest valuation of the employer’s position for IAS 19 purposes were:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | 31 March  2024  % p.a. | 31 March  2023  % p.a. |
| Discount rate | 4.7 | 4.5 |
| CPI Inflation | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| Pension increases | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| Pension accounts revaluation rate | 2.5 | 2.6 |
| Salary increases | 4.0 | 4.1 |

**Mortality assumptions**

The mortality assumptions are based on actual mortality experience of members within the Fund based on analysis carried out as part of the 2022 Actuarial Valuation, and allow for expected future mortality improvements. Samples of life expectancy at age 65 in normal health resulting from these mortality assumptions are shown below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **31 March 2024** | **31 March 2023** |
| **Males** |  |  |
| Member aged 65 at accounting date | 21.7 | 22.2 |
| Member aged 45 at accounting date | 22.7 | 23.2 |
| **Females** |  |  |
| Member aged 65 at accounting date | 24.6 | 25.0 |
| Member aged 45 at accounting date | 25.6 | 26.0 |

**Asset allocation**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Value at**  **31 March 2024** | | | **Value at**  **31 March 2023** |
|  | **Quoted %** | **Unquoted %** | **Total %** | **Total %** |
| Equities | 43.6 | 0.1 | 43.7 | 40.0 |
| Property | - | 9.7 | 9.7 | 11.2 |
| Government bonds | 17.4 | - | 17.4 | 20.6 |
| Corporate bonds | 4.2 | - | 4.2 | 3.0 |
| Multi Asset Credit | 13.3 | - | 13.3 | 13.3 |
| Cash | 5.6 | - | 5.6 | 6.5 |
| Other | 0.2 | 5.9 | 6.1 | 5.4 |
| **Total** | **84.3%** | **15.7%** | **100%** | **100%** |

**Reconciliation of funded status to Statement of Financial Position**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Value as at 31**  **March 2024**  **£M** | **Value as at 31 March 2023**  **£M** |
| Fair value of assets | 4.844 | 3.980 |
| Present value of funded defined benefit obligation | (4.305) | (4.015) |
| **Funded status** | **0.539** | **(0.035)** |
| Unrecognised asset | (0.539) | - |
| Additional Liability due to minimum funding requirements | - | - |
| **Asset / (Liability) recognised on the statement of financial position** | **0.000** | **(0.035)** |

The split of the liabilities at the last valuation between the various categories of members is as follows:

Active members 83%

Deferred pensioners 12%

Pensioners 5%

**Breakdown of amounts recognised in statement of comprehensive net expenditure**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Period Ending**  **31 March 2024 (£M)** | **Year ended**  **31 March 2023 (£M)** |
| **Operating cost** |  |  |
| Current service cost | 0.350 | 0.669 |
| Past service cost (incl. curtailments) | - | - |
| Settlement cost | - | - |
| **Financing cost** |  |  |
| Interest on net defined benefit liability/(asset), before asset restriction | (0.006) | 0.038 |
| Interest on unrecognised asset | - | - |
| Interest on additional liability due to minimum funding requirement | - | - |
|  |  |  |
| **Pension expense recognised in profit and loss** | **0.344** | **0.707** |
|  |  |  |
| **Remeasurements in OCI** |  |  |
| Return on plan assets (in excess of)/below that recognised in net interest | (0.249) | 0.326 |
| Actuarial losses/ (gains) due to changes in financial assumptions | (0.342) | (2.722) |
| Actuarial results/ (gains) due to changes in demographic assumptions | (0.058) | 0.015 |
| Actuarial (gains)/losses due to liability experience | 0.062 | 0.451 |
| Adjustment loss / (Gain) due to restriction of surplus | 0.539 | - |
| Adjustment loss / (Gain) due to a minimum funding requirement | - | - |
|  |  |  |
| **Total amount recognised in OCI** | **(0.048)** | **(1.930)** |
|  |  |  |
| **Total amount recognised** | **0.296** | **(1.223)** |

Allowance for administration expenses included in Current Service Cost (£M) 0.009

**Changes to the present value of the defined benefit obligation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Period Ending**  **31 March 2024**  **(£M)** | **Year ended 31 March 2023**  **(£M)** |
| **Opening defined benefit obligation** | **4.015** | **5.367** |
| Current service cost | 0.350 | 0.669 |
| Interest expense on defined benefit obligation | 0.183 | 0.146 |
| Contributions by participants | 0.114 | 0.107 |
| Actuarial losses/(gains) due to changes in financial assumptions | (0.342) | (2.722) |
| Actuarial results/ (gains) due to changes in demographic assumptions | (0.058) | 0.015 |
| Actuarial losses / (Gains) due to liability experience | 0.062 | 0.451 |
| Net benefits paid out | (0.019) | (0.018) |
| Past service cost (inc curtailments) | - | - |
| Net increase in liabilities from disposals/acquisitions | - | - |
| Settlements | - | - |
| **Closing defined benefit obligation** | **4.305** | **4.015** |

**Changes to the fair value of assets**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Period Ending**  **31 March 2024**  **(£M)** | **Year ended**  **31 March 2023**  **(£M)** |
| **Opening fair value of assets** | **3.980** | **3.805** |
| Interest income on assets | 0.189 | 0.108 |
| Re-measurement of gains/(losses) on assets | 0.249 | (0.326) |
| Contributions paid by the employer | 0.331 | 0.304 |
| Contributions paid by participants | 0.114 | 0.107 |
| Net benefits paid out | (0.019) | (0.018) |
| Net increase in assets from disposals/acquisitions | - | - |
| Settlements | - | - |
| **Closing fair value of assets** | **4.844** | **3.980** |

**Actual return on assets**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Period Ending**  **31 March 2024**  **(£M)** | **Year ended**  **31 March 2023**  **(£M)** |
| Interest income on assets | 0.189 | 0.108 |
| Remeasurement gain/(loss) on assets | 0.249 | (0.326) |
| **Actual return on assets** | **0.438** | **(0.218)** |

**Estimated pension expense in future periods**

An estimate has been provided for the changes to the profit and loss account in future periods, based on the assumptions as at 31 March 2024 set out in Results under IAS 19 (LGPS funded benefits).

**Funded Benefits**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **Period Ending**  **31 March 2025**  **(£M)** |
| Current service cost | 0.316 |
| Interest on net defined benefit liability | (0.008) |
| **Total estimated pension expense** | **0.308** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Allowance for administration expenses included in Current Service Cost (£M) | 0.009 |
| Estimated pensionable payroll over the period (£M) | 1.809 |

**Sensitivity analysis**

The approximate impact of changing the key assumptions on the present value of the funded defined benefit obligation as at 31 March 2024 and the projected service cost for the period ending 31 March 2025 is set out below.

In each case, only the assumption mentioned is altered; all other assumptions remain the same and are summarised in Section 1.

We have not included sensitivity of unfunded benefits (where applicable) on materiality grounds.

A screenshot of a graph

Description automatically generated

**Data Summary - Funded benefits**

The following data was provided by the Committee and/or the Employer and has been used to produce the results in this report. Details of the split of assets between the various asset classes were also provided by the Committee and are shown in Section 1. We have also shown some of the intermediate calculations used in evaluating the figures in this report.

Funded membership data summary

Data as at 31 March 2022

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number** | **Average age (liability weighted)** | **Average retirement age (liability weighted)** | **Total pay (£M)** |
| Active members | 37 | 49.3 | 65.9 | 1.380 |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Number** | **Average age (liability weighted)** | **Average retirement age (liability weighted)** | **Total pay (£M)** |
| Deferred members | 16 | 48.1 | 65.3 | 0.033 |
| Pensioners and dependants | 4 | 63.7 | Na | 0.007 |

**Funded cash-flow data provided**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Months Provided** | **Amount Provided (£M)** | **Amount Used (£M)** |
| Employer – Normal contributions | 10 | 0.275 | - |
| Employer – Additional capital contributions | - | - | - |
| Employer – Early retirement strain on fund payments | - | - | - |
| **Total contributions by the Employer** |  |  | **0.331** |
| Employee – Normal contributions | 10 | 0.095 | - |
| Employee – Added years contributions | 12 | - | - |
| **Total contributions by participants** |  |  | **0.114** |
| Transfers in | - | - | - |
| Other income | - | - | - |
| Transfers out | - | - | - |
| Retirement lump sums | - | - | - |
| Other outgoings | - | - | - |
| Death in service lump sums \* | - | - | - |
| Benefits paid (i.e. pension paid) | - | - | - |
| **Net benefits paid out \*\*** |  |  | **0.019** |

**\*** We have calculated the expected death in service lump sums over the year to be (£M) 0.002

\*\* The ‘Net benefits paid out’ figure includes an allowance for expenses of (£M) 0.009

Any other approximations applied in deriving the “Amount Used” are set out in the Covering Report

**Annualised pensionable payroll over the accounting period**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Description** | **Amount (£M)\*** |
| Period ending 31 March 2024 | 1.740 |
| Period ending 31 March 2023 | 1.560 |

\* The annualised pensionable payroll has been derived from the contributions paid over the relevant accounting period.

**Fund Return**

The gross Fund return has been calculated using the method set out in the Covering Report.

We have made an allowance for investment management expenses by reducing the provided Fund returns by 0.3% based on the Fund’s experience.

The overall Fund return over the accounting period has been calculated as 10.5%. This includes any adjustment to reflect the difference between Fund returns and estimated index returns used over the last accounting period, where appropriate.

We have used know Fund returns for the period ending 31 December 2023 and index returns for the remainder of the accounting period. The index returns between 31 December 2023 and 31 March 2024 have been calculated as 4.1%.

**Information relating to the 2022 triennial valuation of the LGPS scheme**

The results in section (LGPS funded scheme) have been updated to allow for the data and results of the 2022 triennial actuarial valuation. A summary of the membership data is shown above. The following information is provided at this year-end following feedback from auditors. We also permit employers to share with auditors the individual results schedule they received containing the 2022 valuation results and contribution rates for their organisation subject to the terms of disclosure set out in the Covering Report.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Notional assets (£m) | 3.902 |
| Notional assets as a proportion of the whole Fund assets at 31 March 2022 (%) | 0.0% |

**18 Capital commitments**

At 31 March 2024 authorised future capital expenditure amounted to £Nil. The company has no capital commitments at 31March 2023-24 (2022-23: £Nil).

**19 Provisions**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **2023-24** |  | **2022-23** |
|  | **Staff Costs Provision** | **Total** | **Staff Costs Provision** | **Total** |
|  | **£000** | **£000** | **£000** | **£000** |
| Balance at 1 April | - | - | - | - |
| Provided in the year | - | - | 175 | 175 |
| Provisions not required written back | - | - | - | - |
| Provisions utilised in the year | - | - | (175) | (175) |
| Change in discount rate | - | - | - | - |
| Borrowing costs (unwinding of discount) | - | - | - | - |
| Balance at 31 March | - | - | - | - |

**20 Contingent Liabilities**

Northern Ireland Screen received a legal challenge from a former employee regarding an employment related claim. The case has been reviewed by our solicitor and has progressed with a tribunal date being set in early 2025 however a liability cannot be quantified and the likelihood of probable outflow cannot be reliability measured (2022-23: £Nil).

**21 Contingent Assets**

Northern Ireland Screen may be eligible for recoupment. Recoupment is returns from conditional grants/investments made through the Screen Fund. This is not across all contracts and each contract will have their own express details on whether recoupment is applicable and the specified %.

Due to the unpredictable nature of projects and whether they will be successful it is difficult to predict estimated recoupment income for a project. The timings of recoupments vary per project and on average tend to be paid 2-3 months in arrears.

Northern Ireland Screen have looked at previous recoupments and trends and have made an assumption that a further income of up to £70,000 may be paid in relation to the financial year 2023-24 however as this is not virtually certain this amount has not been accrued. Some recoupment may be received in perpetuity.

Recoupment is reviewed regularly by the Chief Operating Officer, Head of Finance and key funding staff to monitor recoupment income and a detailed schedule is completed to track income due and received.

**22 Events after the reporting date**

There were no events after the reporting date requiring adjustments.

**23 Prior period adjustments**

There were no prior period adjustments required.

**24 Additional disclosures to comply with the Financial Reporting Manual (FReM)**

FReM requires non-departmental public bodies to regard grant-in-aid received as contributions from controlling bodies giving rise to a financial interest in the residual interest of the body and hence accounting for as financing, that is by crediting them to income and expenditure reserve. In addition FReM requires grant-in-aid to be accounted for on a cash basis.

However, as the organisation is required to prepare accounts in accordance with the Companies Act 2006, DfE has given the organisation permission to continue to treat grants as income. If Northern Ireland Screen were required to comply with the FReM the result of this compliance would be as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Statement of Financial Activities prepared under FReM** | | | |  |  | |
|  | **Note** | **2023-24** | | **2022-23** | | |
|  |  | **£** | | **£** | | |
| **Incoming Resources** |  |  | |  | | |
| DCMS – BFI - ILBF | 4 | 3,178,000 | | 3,150,440 | | |
| TCAGSM - ILBF | 4 | 847,387 | | 845,166 | | |
| DCMS – BFI - USBF | 4 | 1,059,000 | | 1,867,102 | | |
| BFI | 4 | 160,000 | | 214,443 | | |
| Arts Council | 4 | 106,204 | | 244,052 | | |
| CINES | 4 | 1,816,479 | | 604,141 | | |
| Various funding Income | 4 | 626,216 | | 693,773 | | |
| BFI Skills Cluster | 4 | 237,702 | | - | | |
| Recoupment | 4 | 1,026,920 | | - | | |
| Other income (Pension Interest) | 17 | 189,000 | | 108,000 | | |
| Total Incoming Resources |  | 9,246,908 | | 7,727,117 | | |
|  |  |  | |  | | |
|  | |
| **Resources Expended**  Direct Expenditure of the organisation |  | (29,854,736) | | (28,868,096) | | |
| **Total resources expended** |  | **29,854,736** | | **28,868,096** | | |
| **Net deficit for the year** |  | (20,607,828) | | (21,140,979) | | |
| Actuarial (loss)/gain on pension scheme |  | 48,000 | | 1,930,000 | | |
| **Amount transferred to funds** |  | **(20,559,828)** | | **(19,210,979)** | | |
|  |  | |  | |
|  |  |  | |  | | |
| **Analysis of funds prepared under the FReM** |  |  | |  | | |
|  |  | **2023-24** | | **2022-23** | | |
|  |  | **£** | | **£** | | |
| **Balance at 01 April** |  | **(581,798)** | | **931,393** | | |
| Grant-in-aid received in the year |  | 21,130,000 | | 18,629,181 | | |
| Net operating costs for the year |  | (20,559,828) | | (19,210,979) | | |
| **Balance at 31 March** |  | **(11,626)** | | **(581,798)** | | |

**Date of authorisation for issue**

The Accounting Officer authorised the issue of these financial statements on 18 October 2024.

1. Department for The Economy [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. Department for Communities [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Irish Language Broadcast Fund [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Ulster Scots Broadcast Fund [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Department for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. British Film Institute [↑](#footnote-ref-8)