

## **Northern Ireland Advisory Committee Terms of Reference**

### **General**

The Northern Ireland Advisory Committee (the 'Committee') is one of three Country Advisory Committees - in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland - which contribute to the development of the British Council's strategic objectives and corporate priorities within the relevant country. Its formation or disbandment is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees.

The Northern Ireland Advisory Committee is a forum for advice and has no decision making or executive powers.

### **Purpose**

The Committee's role is to provide advice and fresh insights to the Country Director Northern Ireland, contribute to the development of the British Council's strategic objectives and corporate priorities on behalf of Northern Ireland and reflect the needs of the British Council's target communities within Northern Ireland.

The Committee can also highlight significant issues to the Management Board and the Board of Trustees, through the Regional Director UK and the nominated Country Committee Chair sitting on the Board of Trustees.

### **Objectives**

- Support the British Council in its mission to "build connections, understanding and trust between people in the UK and other countries through arts and culture, education and the English language", in collaboration with Director Northern Ireland and in the context of the British Council's work in Northern Ireland.
- Act as an advocate for the British Council's work in Northern Ireland, in the UK and globally.
- Provide advice on the development of the British Council's strategy.
- Advise the British Council Northern Ireland on major developments in the public, educational, economic and cultural life of Northern Ireland.
- Serve as a channel of professional advice within the areas of expertise represented on the Committee, offer fresh insights and identify new opportunities.
- Provide access to communities within Northern Ireland for whom the British Council's work has particular relevance.

### **Membership**

- The Northern Ireland Advisory Committee will consist of a maximum of fifteen members, including the Chair.
- The Chair and each of the members will serve a term of three years, renewable once for a further term of three years.
- The Country Director acts as Secretary but is not a member.
- The Regional Director UK is invited to attend all meetings but is not a member.

- Four places are reserved for civil servants representing relevant devolved areas (typically education, culture, external affairs and/or economic development). A further two places are reserved for representatives from Ulster University and Queen's University Belfast
- The British Council seeks to secure a complementary range of experience and knowledge across the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee and to ensure that the Committee reflects the diversity of Northern Ireland's society.
- The members and Chair of the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee are recruited through an open and transparent process and are not remunerated.

### **Meetings**

- The Northern Ireland Advisory Committee will normally meet three times per year (and may also hold an away day). The number of meetings called is at the Secretary's discretion in consultation with the Chair.
- In the absence of the Chair attending a meeting then members at that meeting will elect a member to act as a Chair for that meeting only.
- The Committee will be provided with a meeting schedule and a forward plan of agenda items.
- The Secretary should ensure that the Committee is consulted during the corporate strategic planning process.
- The papers should be circulated at least one week before each meeting
- After each meeting, minutes are prepared by the Secretary and approved by the Chair before they are circulated to the members, no later than one month after the meeting.

### **Communication channels**

- The Secretary is the principal recipient of the Committee's advice and is responsible for providing feedback to the Committee on how its input has influenced thinking on the strategy for Northern Ireland and the wider organisation. The feedback will be captured in the minutes.
- The Northern Ireland Advisory Committee has access to the Board of Trustees through its Chair, or through the Chair of the Scotland or Wales Advisory Committee, one of whom sits on the Board of Trustees in rotation.
- It has access to the British Council's Management Board through the Regional Director UK who attends its meetings.
- It is the responsibility of the Secretary to maintain links as appropriate with each of the British Council's Strategic Business Units (Education and Society, Arts, and English and Exams) and the British Council's Sector Advisory Groups. Periodic opportunities should be created for managers of the Strategic Business Units and members of the Sector Advisory Groups to brief and be briefed by the Committee.

### **Review**

The Terms of Reference of the Northern Ireland Advisory Committee will be reviewed at least annually by the Secretary to the Board of Trustees in consultation with the Secretary of the Committee.