

Primary School Website

The Executive expressed the view that from a Corporate Governance perspective it was important that there was some movement on this. It was suggested, that the material be placed on the Agency's website without featuring any of the elements that may infringe copyright etc. Mr McCullough stated that a relationship needs to be established with USAIG to re-visit any issues and make progress. It was proposed and agreed that the appropriate action be taken to have the material "live" on or before 30th November 2007.

Response to USAIG

Mr Patton informed the Board he had received a letter of acknowledgement from USAIG in respect of receipt of the Agency submission. Mr Thompson advised the Board he had been unable to provide a covering letter due to time constraints but would be happy to do so. Mr Devenney congratulated Mr Millar on coordinating the submission on behalf of the Board; however he also stated he was disappointed in Mr Thompson's personal response. Mr Thompson said he would take Mr Devenney's views into consideration.

TV Proposal – Language Programme

Mr Patton informed the Board that progress is being made on the joint project with Foras na Gaeilge. The total cost will be £40,000 with the Agency contributing £25,000. Mr Millar received approval to release an initial payment of £12,000.

5. Chairman's Report

The Chairman highlighted a number of issues:

Presbyterian Historical Society have made contact to get underway with a wide series of joint projects with the Agency for 2008.

RSPBA(NI)

- Saturday workshop with NI Events Co and NITB;
- joining-up of calendar of events with Agency
- Sacramento Highland Games opportunity

DCAL

- to draw up strategy for Ulster-Scots & Agency participation in a series of festival
- in USA for 2008
- Possible visit to NI of Senator James Webb and Senator Lamar Alexander in August 2008; major public event to be planned to coincide with the visit

TIL

- Invitation to attend Irish American Magazine "Stars of the South" event in Atlanta

BBC

- commission new series of "A Dander With Drennan"

News Letter

- Offer of weekly column

Agency

- Communications strategy meetings
- Meeting with Dr Lee Smithy
- Covenanters as theme for 2008, linking in a major way with Scotland-based organisations (Museum of Scotland / Visit Scotland / Covenanter Memorials Association)
- Progress re: James Nesbitt /audiobooks

6. Report from Executive

Potential bid for World Pipe Band Championships

Mr Patton informed the Board he had met with DCAL and representatives of the Arts Council and the NI Events Company. An approach is to be made to the RSPBA NI Branch to seek clarification on a number of issues but in principle the organisations present would provide all support they could.

Ulster-Scots Drama

Mr Patton updated the Board on the proposed new drama to be toured in the USA and Ireland. The Agency would commission the drama and arrangements for touring the play in the United States was being coordinated by Mr Norman Houston (currently with DETI but who would shortly be leaving to head the NI Bureau in Washington)

Project working with young Americans

Mr Patton will meet with Mr Houston, Dr Tim Campbell of The St. Patrick's Centre and Mr Ferdie Mac an Fhailli of Foras na Gaeilge on Friday 12th October 2007 and will advise the board members of the outcome at the next meeting.

Meeting with Belfast Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Mr Patton informed the Board he had met the Bureau and Mr William Humphrey regarding the possibility of providing Ulster-Scots entertainment in Belfast. He recommended that Ulster-Scots Agency become a member of the Belfast Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Approval: Mr Patton to progress as outlined.

Mr Simpson suggested that the Agency explore possible links with Derry City Visitors and Convention Bureau.

Sacramento Highland Games

This would involve Drum Majors from RSPBA NI Branch attending the games in 2008. Mr Patton advised the Board that it would be a great opportunity for the Agency to be engaged with and he was seeking potential funding for the Drum Majors.

Action: Mr Patton to further explore this issue and feedback to the Board.

7. Budget and Business Plan Progress 2007

The Progress report was received and accepted. Mr Patton informed the Board that there appeared to be some concern about the Agency moratorium within DCAL and it was anticipated that there would be a meeting regarding this and how the Agency's budget was managed. Mr O'Donnell proposed that the Board reaffirm the imposition of a moratorium as an appropriate risk management tool to manage the budget. This proposal was accepted and agreed by the Board. Concern was again expressed that the Agency were unable to utilise accrual accounting.

Action: Mr McCullough to report progress at next Board meeting.

8. Grants

(1) Mid Armagh Community Network

Proposal:	£17,050 of £45,060
	This group is based in Markethill and is one of the largest and most successful of Ulster Scots groups. The proposal is for an extensive programme of Ulster Scots traditional music, dance (both Highland and Scottish Country), and traditional activities. This will engage 110 people in musical tuition across a range of instruments and 65 people in dance classes. Support has already been received from the Arts Council and Awards for all.

The Board were in agreement to fund this application for the recommended amount of £17,050.

Proposed and agreed.

Mr Patton also drew the Board's attention to Chelsea Dougan who had been involved in a tragic accident. Chelsea was a young promising highland dancer and actively involved in Ulster- Scots activities with MACN. The Board expressed their sadness and proposed a goodwill gift was sent to Chelsea. Mr Devenney suggested a thoughtful worded letter be sent also.

Action: Mr Hanna to speak to those close to the family to determine what might be appropriate.

Mr Thompson suggested we attempt to get David Healy visit Chelsea as she was an avid fan of football.

Action: Mr McCullough and Miss Gilmore will speak to David's agent.

(2) Ulster Historical Foundation

Proposal:	£23,180
	A proposal from the Ulster Historical Foundation was deferred from the last meeting and will be tabled again. Members will have a copy of the proposal and whilst it is not a claim under our financial assistance scheme it would be appropriate to deal with when considering grants.

Mr Patton and Mr Thompson stated they were enthusiastic about this project and commended it to the Board. The total will be £23,180 for 3 publications. Mr Wall suggested books be monitored in the usage. This was accepted and agreed by the Board. The Board agreed that the first publication should be Book 2 on the list, *'Presbytery and the Popular Mind': the influence of Calvinism and Presbyterianism on the Formation of an Ulster Scots Ethnic Community*.

Proposed and agreed.

9. Communications Strategy

Miss Gillian Gilmore presented her proposed Communications Strategy to the Board. The Board congratulated Miss Gilmore on her excellent strategy and it was agreed that the proposed strategy be adopted and implemented.

Proposed and agreed.

10. Development Officer's Reports

Mr Hanna delivered his report to the Board on the work he has been involved in during the year 2006/2007;

Community Development:

Mr Hanna helped to establish several new groups including B.U.S.H Project, Quoile Ulster-Scots, Redburn Community, Saintfield Ulster-Scots, Kingdom of Dalriada, Ulster-Scots in Ballymoney, Ballykeel in Ballymena and most recently Easy Belfast Ulster-Scots. Mr Hanna stated that Belfast is still an area which needs greater help and guidance to establish the Ulster-Scots community.

Two historic showcase events took place; St.Patrick's Centre, Downpatrick and Queen's University Belfast.

Summer Schools 2006/2007

2006 and 2007 were both huge successes with 6 running in 2006 and 33 in 2007. Mr Hanna stated our focus should be on young people and not just during the summer months, but in Autumn and Winter also.

Festivals

A number of hugely successful festivals occurred in 2007 including Newry Frontier Festival, Taunaughnieve Festival and Bann Valley Festival. In 2008 a possible Titanic Festival linked to East Belfast Ulster-Scots Group may be established.

SEUPB

Mr Hanna has accompanied Jane Wallace, (Project Officer for East) on a number of council meeting's which had positive outcomes.

Current Projects

Introducing Ulster-Scots activities into Kilkeel Primary School, Kilkeel High School and Kilbroney Integrated Primary School.

Mr Thompson stated 2 key points that were raised from Mr Hanna's report; **Youth and Belfast.**

The Board congratulated Mr Hanna on his report.

11. Staffing

Members of staff with the exception of the CEO withdrew from the meeting at this point. Mr Patton advised the Board on the progress of new posts:

- 2 Development Officer's
- 1 Education Officer
- 1 Grants Officer

Mr Patton advised the Board of Derek Reaney's desire to take a one year career break and that he will be leaving as of the 1st November 2007. The Board suggested that in the interim whilst awaiting a temporary appointment to cover this post the potential of extra hours for Mrs Freen should be explored.

Concern was raised with levels of sickness within the office whilst not doubting that all absences were genuine.

At this point Mr Patton retired whilst the Board deliberated on the CEO performance against agreed targets. The Board approved a performance bonus of 8% for the reporting year 2006/07.

Whilst staff were absent from the meeting the Board members opened and considered correspondence received from the Director of Culture.

12. NSMC Meeting

NSMC in language body format is due to meet on 26th October 2007. Mr Thompson and Mr Patton to attend this meeting.

13. Board Appointments

It was noted that the term of the current Board will cease as of 12th December 2007.

14. AOB

SUEPB Project Update

The project officers have been engaging with councils and there are 2 Cultural Hub meetings to take place;

- 17th October 2007 – Omagh
- 18th October 2007 – Armagh

The Board paid tribute to all staff involved.

Summer Schools

The summer schools in 2007 were a huge success and have circulated positive feedback. Debriefing sessions will take place on;

- 12th October 2007 – Lisburn
- 19th October 2007 – Londonderry

Foyle Festival

This festival was a great success.

International Ploughing Championships/Kilkenny Festival

Mr Devenney stated how successful these events were and how he would like to see Ulster-Scots taken to the rest of Ireland, Scotland, England and Wales.

Mr McCullough informed the Board on media coverage the Agency received from the BBC and RTE as a result of these events

Mr Devenney congratulated Mr McCullough on his work and suggested the Ulster-Scots Agency express their thanks to Mr Ian Burrows and band members for participating in the Kilkenny Festival at such short notice and for doing a fantastic job.

International Horse Show

Mr McCullough asked all Board members to contact him if they required tickets to attend the show.

Language Body Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 10th December 2007 in Belfast. It was agreed to move our scheduled meeting from 7th December to the morning of the 10th. Mr Patton to confirm details with Foras na Gaeilge and advise all board members as soon as possible. Mr Thompson informed the board both he and the CEO had received a letter from a Board member of Foras na Gaeilge and the Board were advised of the content.

Action: Mr Patton to acknowledge receipt of this correspondence.

Ulster-Scots Tattoo

Mr McCullough informed the Board that a provisionally booked had been made for the Odyssey Arena next year (2008) for a possible Ulster-Scots Tattoo. The Board were in agreement that this would be a worthwhile venture and advised Mr McCullough to confirm the booking.

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will take place on Thursday 15th November 2007 at Trinity College, Dublin.

Signed:

Dated: