

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
75th Board Meeting
16th February 2008
Holiday Inn Hotel, Belfast**

Present

Chairman; Mr Mark Thompson
Mr William Humphrey
Mr William Leathem
Dr William Roulston
Ms Angela Graham
Ms Jacqui Reed
Dr Aileen Douglas
Dr Ian Adamson

In attendance

Mr George Patton
Mr Michael McCullough

Recording Secretary

Lyndsey Hanna

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Mr Thompson welcomed everyone to the 75th Meeting of the Board at the Holiday Inn, Belfast.

Mr Thompson informed the Board that Ms Gilmore would be giving a presentation on the Corporate Identity.

2. Apologies

Apologies were sent on behalf of Mr Millar, Director of Language & Education who is off ill at present.

3. Minutes of last meeting 25.01.08 and 10.12.08

Minute of 25.01.08

Dr Adamson informed the Board that he would not be able to make the proposed dates for board meetings on 18th April and 23rd May 2008.

With the exception of a few typing errors the minutes was adopted by the Board.

Proposed – Mrs Reed. Seconded – Mrs Graham

Minute of 10.12.07

This minute could only be proposed and seconded by the two Board members who are continuing their term. The minute was adopted.

Proposed – Dr Adamson. Seconded – Mr Thompson

4. Matters Arising

Internal Audit Committee Meeting

As the last minute of the Internal Audit Committee could not be approved the current Board gave a collective approval for this minute to be adopted.

5. Chairman's Report

The Chairman listed the events that he had attended and the organisations he had been in contact with since the previous meeting:

World Pipe Championships

He and Mr Humphrey went to Scotland for the announcement of the World Pipe Championships location for 2010. Belfast came second leaving Glasgow as the host city for the event.

Mr Thompson asked that the Executive send a letter to the Lord Mayor of Belfast City Council and his team to thank them for their assistance in the work to promote and nominate Belfast as the host for this event. He also gave thanks to Mr Humphrey on all his assistance and involvement.

Mr Thompson spent 3 days in Scotland visiting historical sites on behalf of the steering committee for the Covenanters programme. He is also looking at possible INTERREG funding for this programme. He will feedback more details at the next meeting.

Forthcoming meetings:

- Meeting with CAL committee at the NI Assembly on 28th February 2008.
- Meeting with representatives of the Home Coming Scotland events.
- Meeting with the Controller of BBC Scotland to look at joint programmes.

6. Report from the Executive

Belfast/Nashville

The Belfast/Nashville committee will be travelling to Nashville in March. Mr Humphrey will be attending in his capacity as a Councillor of the Belfast City Council. He stressed that this would give opportunity for networking with potential links that will open up new opportunities for Ulster-Scots.

Action: It was proposed that the Agency arrange for materials on Ulster-Scots to be sent to America for this event.

Proposed – Dr Adamson. Seconded – Mr Leathem.

A group from Nashville will in return visit Belfast in April. Mr Humphrey will speak with the committee to see if the agency can be involved in hosting an event while the visitors are here.

The Board were keen that the Agency send a representative (the Chair) to this event in Nashville and Mr Thompson to check availability and advise the Executive accordingly.

Museums in Coleraine and Virginia

CBC has asked that the Agency provide financial support for Ms Helen Perry to attend a conference organised by the Association of Museums of Virginia

The Board felt that the Agency could benefit from this research and suggested that the Agency offer a Sponsorship of £500 towards cost in return for a full report on research carried out on potential links with museums in Virginia

Belfast Convention Bureau

Mr Patton advised the Board that in 2007 34 Cruise Ships had docked in Belfast. He envisages that this would be a great opportunity to showcase Ulster-Scots during 2008. Potentially this would see the Agency showcasing Ulster Scots performers whilst passengers were disembarking. Additionally the Agency are exploring the possibility of Ulster Scots murals as the ships docked and discussions are being held with the Harbour Commissioners in this regard.

Finally there was the potential for Ulster Scots “bus tours”. This would not be something that the agency could provide but may be able to provide support to an organisation willing to take on this initiative.

Proposed – Dr Adamson. Seconded – Dr Roulston.

Gillian Gilmore gave a presentation to the Board on the new Corporate Identity.

The Board wish to see alternative choices for the corporate identity than those that were tabled today. Mr Gilmore is to email these to the Board and feedback will be given at the next meeting.

Janice Taylor-Clarke from the Agency gave a presentation to the Board on “Funding Assessments over £5,000”.

Mrs Taylor-Clarke tabled a document on this. It was proposed by the Board that grant applications brought before the Board should be increased from £5,000 to £10,000.

Proposed – Mr Humphrey. Seconded – Mr Leathem.

It was suggested that assessment of Grant Applications should include TSN. This is not to be an essential criteria but more consideration should be given to these areas.

Action: The Executive are to assess how this would be addressed in the

application form and prepare a paper to be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

Proposed – Mr Humphrey. Seconded – Ms Reed.

Mr Patton advised the Board that approval would also need to come from Sponsor Departments.

Traunche Funding for Festivals

The Board were advised that all applications for festivals are to be received by the Agency before 29.02.08.

A paper was tabled on festival funding re: Assessment Process. Areas suggested for consideration were: experience, other funders contributions, contributions from the group, publicity campaign and the numbers attending against total cost. To forward to the next stage applications are to have a minimum 10 points from this first stage.

In 2007 the Agency supported 25 festivals amounting to £200,000. in 2008 there will be a possible 18 applications.

It was suggested that when the assessment process is complete the Agency should send out a press release informing communities of the support the Agency is provided to festivals. It will also provide initial PR to the communities involved.

It was proposed by the Board to adapt the outlined document and ensure that each Development Officer has at least one Festival Programme in their area.

8. Grant Applications

(1) IUR-fm (aerwaves Ltd)

Proposal:	Seeking £4940 from a total cost of £6190
	The project will provide training to 5 Presenters / Producers for a weekly Ulster Scots Programme on community radio in the Newry /south east Ulster area.

The Board were in agreement to decline this application.

Proposed – Ms Reed. Seconded – Dr Adamson.

(2) Ulster-Scots Folk Orchestra Association

Proposal:	
	There are two applications from the Folk Orchestra which were deferred from the previous Board. However these applications were dependent upon financial assistance from the Arts Council. The Orchestra was not successful in this regard and therefore the applications as they exist cannot be considered. The Folk Orchestra is aware of the situation.

Both applications were received with adequate time in the time frame set out by the Agency. The programme of events continued with no confirmation of funding. With the Arts Council declining funding the Orchestra now has a spend of £500 which will now not received funding.

The Board approved for the Executive to negotiate with the group and provide some assistance in helping with the shortfall they have occurred.

Proposed – Dr Douglas. Seconded – Mrs Graham.

(3) Kilmegan and Aughlisnafin Rural Community Group

This relates to an application received last year which was initially incorrectly assessed. When the matter was pursued the award was reduced.

The total cost of the project was £23,330.00 The Agency offered funding of £7,818.00.

If the Agency grant of £7818 is added to the total income it amounts to £20,978 leaving a shortfall of £1,136.49.

The Board agreed that the Agency should pay the shortfall in this instance as a gesture of good will.

Proposed – Dr Adamson. Seconded – Mr Leathem.

(4) York Island Arts and Heritage Association

Proposal:	Seeking £20,640 from a total cost of £25,640
	The proposal seeks to establish an online map based catalogue of Ulster Scots built heritage sites. The organisation believes this will aid and stimulate historical and genealogical research into Ulster Scots.

The Board were in agreement to decline this application.

Proposed – Mr Leathem. Seconded – Mrs Reed.

SPONSORSHIP APPLICATIONS

Royal Scottish Pipe Band Association

The Association are requesting £30,000 sponsorship against a project worth £94,450. They are looking for the Agency to tie into a 3 year package of Year 1 £30,000, Year 2 £35,000 and Year 3 £40,000. A total of £105,000 over 3 years.

The Board feel that the Agency will receive value for money as the scale of the Royal Scottish Pipe Band events attracts thousands.

Proposed – Mr Leathem. Seconded – Mrs Graham.

“On Eagles Wing”

The Agency gave £50,000 sponsorship towards this event in 2004 which include a claw back to the money once the show became profit making. The owners of “On Eagles Wing” are now selling the show and have approached the Agency to remove the clause in order to make the show more appealing to bidders.

After speaking with Sponsor Departments Mr Patton advised the Board that the Agency is unable to do this.

Dr Adamson left the meeting at this point and the Board retired for lunch.

7. Budget and Business Plan Progress for 2008

Financial reports of spend to date were presented to the Board. Approximately £100k of spend to date related to accrued expenditure from 2007. This being the first financial report of the year there was little opportunity to identify trends in spend and a more detailed discussion on finance could occur at the March Board meeting.

10. AOB

FUSE fm

The radio station ran in 5 locations in 2007 with a consultant employed to do so. Due to great demand this year the Agency would like to progress this in 2008.

To make it more cost effective the Executive proposed that the Agency employ an in-house employee on a 20hr week contract for 10 months on a pro rata of £21,000. This will be better value for money than hiring a consultant and at the end of the programme the Agency will own an archive of work created that can be used over.

It was proposed by the Board to accept the advice of the Executive and for them to proceed with the recruitment process.

Mr McCullough also advised the Board that he was looking into the possibility of the Agency employing 3 musical tutors to go into the communities and after schools clubs to provide tuition. At present the Agency are paying consultant rates for this.

Action: Mr McCullough to present this further at the next meeting.

Primary School Website

For information Mr Patton informed the Board that the Department of Education have been seeking clarification on the site in relation to the funding they provided to CCEA toward the site. Mr Millar will respond to this.

Lyric Theatre

The Executive outlined the proposal that the Agency commission 6 Ulster-Scots plays by Dan Gordon. These would cost £1,500 per play. If the first was to proceed it would have a Titanic theme and aimed at Key Stage 2.

The Board engaged in the idea and proposed that the Executive proceed with this project.

Proposed – Mr Roulston. Seconded – Mr Humphrey.

David Healy Fitba Day

Mr McCullough advised the Board that letters have been sent to the 26 northern Councils and the 3 bordering councils.

After visiting two locations, Craigavon BC and Cookstown DC for a location Mr McCullough recommend Cookstown DC but needs approval to proceed.

Proposed – Mrs Graham. Seconded Dr – Douglas.

After Schools Clubs

The Agency will be running 24 After Schools Clubs in 2008. Each venue will run for 5 weeks on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon. The Executive are keen to ensure that all entertainers employed by the Agency will be provided with some Child Protection training.

CAL Committee

Mr Patton and the Chair, Mr Thompson will be giving a presentation to the CAL Committee on 28th February 2008.

Straightforward Productions

Straightforward are producing a further 4 episodes of “Dander with Drennan”. They are looking for sponsorship form the Agency and in return will give the rights of the programmes to the Agency so they can be reproduced.

Action: Mr Thompson to prepare a paper on this issue for next meeting.

NSMC

Meeting with NSMC and Minister on 16th April 2008.

The Agency is to prepare a paper on Scotland and North American links. One element of the paper would relate to 50 ½ hour programmes which PBS will commission. It may also look at building a website in year 1.

The Walled City

Mr Roulston brought it to the attention of the Board that the 1st Derry Presbyterian Church that has been closed for some time has been given funding from the NITB to restore it. Mr Roulston is to arrange a meeting between Agency and church representatives to explore possible support for an exhibition. He will report back at the next meeting.

Office Accommodation

Mr McCullough advised the Board that the Agency is looking for new office accommodation in the Belfast location. Any Board members familiar with the area are welcome to forward suggestions.

Ulster-Scots Heritage Council Funding

The Council had an under spend of £30,000 in their funding in 2007. This was due to staff shortages and free office accommodation. The Board were in agreement to give the Council the £30,000 to proceed this year until they give a presentation on their 2007 spend at a future Board meeting.

Proposed – Dr Roulston. Seconded – Mr Leathem.

SEUPB

The SEUPB funding will finish in May 2008. The Agency have received an extra £73,000 for this project. It will go toward promoting the Plantation project which will be launched in April/May 2008.

9. Staffing

Mr Thompson, Mr Patton and Mr McCullough left the Board meeting at this point.

Mr Humphrey Chaired this meeting on behalf of Mr Thompson. The Board discussed issues that have been raised within the Agency regarding a staff grievance.

The Board were in agreement that there was a need to appoint a Deputy Chair to handle this matter further. It was proposed and agreed that Mrs Graham become the Agency Deputy Chair.

Proposed – Mr Leathem. Seconded – Dr Roulston.

Mrs Graham accepted this newly appointed position.

11. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will take place in Dublin. Mr Patton is to speak with Tourism Ireland re: presentation and if the Agency is able to use their Board facilities for the day on 28th March 2008.

Signed:

Dated: