

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
Board Meeting
17th May 2007
Holiday Inn Hotel,
Belfast.**

Present: **Chairman;** Mr Mark Thompson
 Dr Ian Adamson
 Mr Jim Devenney
 Mr Eddie O'Donnell

In attendance: Mr George Patton
 Mr Michael McCullough
 Mrs Vanessa Wilson

Recording Secretary: Miss Lyndsey Hanna

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman Mr Thompson welcomed the Board to the 67th meeting of the Board at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Belfast.

2. Apologies

Apologies were accepted on behalf of Mr Wall and Dr Lunney. Mr Millar sent apologies due to other Agency commitments.

3. Minutes of Meeting 30th March 2007

The Board accepted the minutes of the previous meeting.

Proposed and agreed; that the Minutes be accepted.

It was noted that Dr Lunney provided feedback to the Executive regarding the Business Plan for 2008.

The Board were in agreement that all members should note their attendance in writing 3 days before the meetings take place.

Proposed and agreed.

4. Matters Arising

Letter to NSMC

Mr Patton updated the Board on this issue. He had been informed that NSMC had delegated the decision re: Standardisation of the Ulster-Scots Language to Sponsor Departments. There is still no outcome. Mr Thompson and Mr Patton have approached Departments on separate occasion to clarify this matter.

Until clarification has been given the Agency and Board must adhere to the directive outlined to them.

Mr Thompson suggested that the Board invite Dr Ivan Herbson to give the Board a presentation on the work of the translation committee after clarity has been sought from Sponsor Departments.

Mr Patton informed the Board that their decision to hand the Primary Schools Website project over to the Ulster-Scots Academy Implementation Group, with the stipulation that the website should be live by 31st August 2007 has not been implemented. Whilst neither Sponsor Department has any issues this had not progressed given the discussion at the last meeting.

This issue will continue to appear on the agenda until resolved.

TV Programme Proposal

There has been no progress on this item. To date the project is still searching for an appropriate narrator.

Primary School Project

This item has been dealt with above under "Letter to NSMC".

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:

- Mr Thompson attended the Ulster Historical Foundation's 50th Anniversary Dinner. The Foundation is interested in a joint partnership with the Agency in printing materials. They have an existing customer database that would be useful to the Agency. The Board were in agreement to approve.
Proposed and agreed; for Mr Thompson and the Executive to work with the Ulster Historical Foundation.
- Mr Thompson informed the Board that an Ulster-Scots plaque would be placed in the Rathlin Visitors Centre on Rathlin Island by the Ulster History Circle to commemorate the "Bruce 700".

- Mr Thompson informed the Board that he has approached NSMC re: Board member positions. He will know more in October 2007 and will keep Board members updated.

6. Executive Reports

All Executive reports were tabled. The following items on Mr Patton's report were discussed:

- Mr Patton met with John Nicholson and Ian Kennedy of "Straightforward Production" regarding a proposed TV documentary on the plantation. This project will cost £25,000 for research and the end product will be owned by the Agency.
Proposed and agreed; for Mr Patton to continue working on this project with funding approved to £25,000.
- Mr Patton met Pete Bleakney who was suggesting the establishment of an Ulster Scots TV station via the internet. This is to be visited again at the next Board meeting when all Board members will have received a copy of the plan.

Mr Thompson noted from Mr Derek Reaney's report the subject of the Maiden City Festival.

Mr Patton informed the Board that Mr Reaney and Mr Kee are now working on the plan for an Ulster-Scots Festival in Londonderry as the Agency has a responsibility to build and keep working in the North West to promote Ulster-Scots.

They will invite representatives from community groups to shadow the organisation of this event to enable them to gain the skills to run a large festival in years to come.

7. Budget and Business Plan 2006/7

Mr McCullough tabled the figures of spend to date.

Communities are becoming more aware of the needs to make festivals more appealing to visitors and are receiving assistance from the Agency to do this.

Mr Thompson complimented to Mr Devenney on the recent success of the East Donegal Ulster-Scots group festival in Letterkenny, Co Donegal in April 2007.

The Board suggested that Mr Patton invite the Ulster-Scots Heritage Council to make a presentation to the Board at a future Board meeting.

It was noted at all future reports from key stakeholders will be forwarded to Board members so that they can see the good work to these groups.

8. Grants

(1) Millstone Events Forum

Proposal:	£6,550 of £11,445
	“Ulster-Scots Community Festival” This festival will run over 3 days. The aim of the festival is to promote awareness of the Ulster-Scots traditions on the Moneyslane area by reaching out to the wider community by combining Ulster-Scots elements with social activities to reach a wide audience.

Proposed and agreed; that this application be approved for £6,550.

(2) Kidiscape (Newry Heritage and Development Association Youth Group)

Proposal:	£19,500 of £22,700
	“Ulster-Scots Frontier Festival 2007” This free event will spread over 3 weeks. This festival will lead to a better understanding of the Ulster-Scots language, arts, music and dance. This event will have a huge impact on the community.

Proposed and agreed; that this application be approved for £17,025.

(3) Inner East Historical Association

Proposal:	£6,900 of £10,900
	“11 th Titanic Celebration” This is a one day event that should attract a large amount of people. It will bring working performances which will include Ulster-Scots culture.

Proposed and agreed; that this application be approved for £5,300.

(4) Burnside Ulster-Scots Society

Proposal:	£6,685 of £11,585
	“Ulster-Scots American Festival” This is a two day event. This will include a concert, competitions, Ulster-Scots displays and an exhibition on famous Ulster-Scots Americans, US Presidents and Border Reivers.

Proposed and agreed; that this application be approved for £6,685.

(5) Schomberg Festival Committee

Proposal:	£12,845 of £15,845
	“Schomberg Ulster-Scots Festival” This festival will increase the public awareness of Ulster-Scots culture. It will include performers, public displays, open air concerts, workshops and exhibitions.

Proposed and agreed; that this application be approved for £11,247.

(6) Milltown Rural Development Association

Proposal:	£7,785 of £11,940
	“Bann Valley Ulster-Scots Festival” This event will run for 3 days and will include educational lectures, musical entertainment, cultural dancing displays, historical exhibition and open-air family fun day.

Proposed and agreed; that this application be approved for £7,785.

Bushmills Ulster-Scots Group Project

Other grant aid for this project has been re-defined. After discussion the Board agreed to keep their funding as previously agreed.

Proposed and Agreed.

Under care and duty for community groups the Agency are to monitor the costs they are incurring for performances to ensure that they are not being over charged.

Development Grant Proposal

The Executive proposed that a development grant be put in place. This will make money available up to £3,000 if a group commits to work with the Agency Development Workers over a year period. This will involve capacity building and the group will be involved in a 2/3 year programme until they are confident in their work of organising programmes.

Proposed and agreed in principle; that the Executive are to take this project forward.

9. Corporate Plan 2008 - 2010

The Corporate Plan 2008/10 is now with Sponsor Departments for approval. All suggestions from the Board were added to the final draft.

The Business Plan has been given to all Board for the second time for comments to Mr Patton.

10. Institute of Ulster-Scots Studies

The IUSS submitted a report to the Executive but Mr Millar requested a more comprehensive report. Mr Millar is now content with the comprehensive report and has recommended the institute can draw down further funding.

Proposed and Agreed by the Board.

The next Audit for the Institute will be completed by December 2007. After referring to DCAL's recommended list of auditors, Mr Patton and Mr Millar will be meeting with Mr Eric Kaufman to see if he is interested in carrying out the audit.

Mr Thompson suggested that the Institute needs to publicise their events and publication more in the future to ensure that people are being made aware of the work they are doing.

11. Staffing

Mr McCullough informed the board the new Communications Manager commenced work at the Agency on Tuesday 1st May 2007.

Agency staff attended the planned training away days on 10th and 11th May 2007. From this the Executive were able to identify the key area that they needed to work on to improve productivity at the Agency.

12. AOB

SEUPB Project Update

The staff is carrying out a project with 20 libraries in Northern Ireland from 21st to the 25th May 2007. This will include storytelling and Ulster-Scots music. Primary Schools in the areas will be invited along on the day.

SEUPB ran an "Article Four Check" on the funding spend to date for the project. It was approved and all procedures are in place. When written report is available it will be copied to all Board members.

Robert the Bruce Festival

The playing fields where the Robert the Bruce was to take place are no longer available. A new venue has been secured at the local primary school in Bushmills.

TV Research Proposals

This item was covered at item 4.

Belfast/Nashville Sister City Links

For Information - The Mayor of Nashville will be visiting Belfast on 28/29th June 2007. The Agency will be involved in this.

Community Radio

The 15th June 2007 is the launch date in Newtownards for the radio show.

David Healey Coaching Day

This event will take place in Newtownards on 23rd June 2007. The Northern Ireland Scouts have volunteered to carry out all administration for the event. Ticket distribution has been done.

Summer Schools

Thirty six Summer Schools will take place over the Province during July and August 2007. They will consist of 20 sessions, 15 of those are to be Ulster-Scots themed, 5 must be Agency driven and 3 must be language sessions. This will ensure quality of the content.

Eddie Hanna, a student from the Ulster-Scots Society at Queens University, Belfast will be working at the Agency over the summer period to help Agency staff in the running of these.

After Schools Clubs

This pilot scheme will run in 3 schools, 2 days per week over 3 weeks. If the project is successful it will run next year in TSN areas.

Reivers Festival

Castle Coole is the possible venue for the Reivers Festival on 18th August 2007. At present Mr Reaney is working with key stakeholders in that area to progress events.

Mr Thompson suggested that the Agency should in future plan in advance for large festivals. After speaking with Aubrey Irwin from Tourism Ireland he was advised by him that they schedule and plan their calendar of events 18 months in advance.

Traunche Funding for Festivals

The Executive are to look at the possibility of inviting applications to apply for festival funding with a deadline. This will allow future planning and publicity for events.

Mr Thompson informed the Board that Tourism Ireland are keen to meet with the Board. The Board were in agreement to schedule this for the September Board meeting.

Action: Executive to arrange

Calendar of Events

Gillian Gilmore is presently creating a calendar of summer Ulster-Scots events. The Board were asked to forward other events (not engaged with the Agency) that could be added to this list.

Interreg

It was suggested that Mr Devenney arrange a meeting with Mr Reaney to take forward the application to Interreg for the Agency.

13 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should take place in Armagh on Friday 22nd June 2007.

SIGNED:

DATED: