

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
Board Meeting
22nd June 2007
Armagh City Hotel,
Armagh.**

Present: **Chairman;** Mr Mark Thompson
 Dr Linde Lunney
 Mr Pat Wall
 Mr Eddie O'Donnell
 Mr Jim Devenney
 Mr Alistair Simpson
 Mr Bob Stoker

In attendance: Mr George Patton
 Mr Jim Millar
 Mrs Vanessa Wilson

Recording Secretary: Miss Lyndsey Hanna

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman, Mr Thompson welcomed the Board to the 68th Meeting of the Board at the Armagh City Hotel, Belfast.

2. Apologies

No apologies were received.

3. Minutes of Meeting 17th May

The Board accepted the minutes of the previous meeting with the exception of a few typos.

Proposed and agreed; that the Minutes be accepted.

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. Mr Thompson and Mr Patton have approached Departments on separate occasion to clarify this matter. They had sought an outcome to present to the Board at this meeting. Mr Patton advised that it was anticipated there would be a definite response in the next few weeks.

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

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

It was suggested that the Executive invite members of the Departments to a later Board meeting to receive a presentation on Ulster-Scots.

Primary School Project

This matter cannot progress further until the above issue is resolved.

TV Programme Proposal

Vinegar Hill Productions have now identified a compere for the TV proposal. A letter of offer has been made to the candidate and Vinegar Hill are waiting acceptance.

It is hoped that Mr Willie Drennan will be involved in this project.

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 had a meeting with representatives from the Ulster Historical Foundation
- Potential Postal drop in Antrim
- Mr Thompson had a meeting with the Scottish Cultural Minister

Mr Thompson is in discussions with James Nesbitt's agent to see if he can secure James's assistance in producing some audio texts.

Presentation to the Board from item 4 of agenda.

A presentation was given to the Board by Pete Bleakney from NVTV.

He proposed that the Agency establish an Ulster-Scots TV Channel via the internet that could reach Ulster-Scots throughout the world. This would allow the Agency to build archives of material.

Through this the Agency could avail of:

- Possible advertising and sponsorship on the web TV
- Children's Ulster-Scots programmes and more

- Set up cost for this would be around £70,000 with annual running costs for a two man crew of £60/70,000.

6. Executive Reports

All Executive reports were tabled.

Mr Patton highlighted that he and Jonathan Burgess met Norman Houston, Head of Tourism at DETI to progress proposals for an Ulster Scots drama to be toured in the USA. At present Mr Houston is working on possibilities to move this idea forward.

The Board noted the reports from the Executive and Development Workers.

It was suggested that from this point on the Executive are to change their style of report. They are only to note potential projects or progress of live projects rather than the style of a diary of activities attended that is being presented to the Board at present.

It was suggested that the Development Workers give a 15 minute presentation to the Board on their progress every quarter.

Proposed and agreed.

7. Budget and Business Plan 2006/7

The figures of spend to date were tabled.

It was agreed by the Board that the Agency Float is to be reviewed at the end of the summer as storage costs are high.

8. Presentation from Alister McReynolds

Mr McReynolds gave the Board a presentation re: his studies into the Ulster-Scots in Maine, USA.

9. Grants

(1) Kilmegan & Aughlisnafin Rural Community Group

Proposal:	£13,330 of £23,330
	“The Ulster-Scots Factor” This project will promote the best of the Ulster-Scots traditions and culture. It will run for 3 days and will include exhibitions and workshops.

The Board were in agreement that this group should receive 100% of the eligible Ulster-Scots element and 33% of appropriate overheads.

Proposed and Agreed.

(2) Hollymount Rural Community Association

Proposal:	£8,970 of £9,470
	“Cranley Games” This is a one day event on 28 th July 2007. This festival will promote awareness and understanding of Ulster-Scots culture through workshops, music, song and dance.

The Board were in agreement that this group should receive £7,102.50.

Proposed and agreed.

(3) Ballymageough Rural Development Association

Proposal:	£5,590 of £6,140
	“Ballymageough Dixieland Festival” This is a two day event on 17 th & 18 th July 2007. This festival will attract a crowd of 1500 people. Events will include: Reivers, history show, displays of world war two American Army vehicles. Dance, music and cultural events.

Mr Thompson retired from the meeting and Mr Devenney (Deputy Chairman) chaired the remainder of it.

Mr Stoker left the meeting at this point.

The Board were in agreement that this group should receive £4,290.

Proposed and agreed.

(4) Lower North Belfast Community Council

Proposal:	£4,950 of £10,950
	“Ulster-Scots Family Day” This is a one day event on 18 th August 2007. This festival will attract a large percentage of the youth of this area that want to identify themselves as Ulster-Scots. Events will include MacDonald Brothers show, highland dancers, accordion bands, and lambeg drumming.

The Board were in agreement that this group should receive £4,950.

Proposed and agreed.

(5) York Island Arts & Heritage Association

Proposal:	£25,140 of £31,140
	“www.ulsterscotsheritage.com” This project will involve creating a web based application which will allow Ulster-Scots to document and share their knowledge, learn from others and interact with interested people from all over the world.

The Board were in agreement to defer this application until the next meeting.

Proposed and agreed.

(6) Ulster-Scots Folk Orchestra

Proposal:	£9,230 of £9,230
	“Youth Project” This project will run from 01.09.07 to 28.02.08. It will educate school pupils in the culture and traditions of Ulster-Scots music, song, dance, language and history.

The Board were in agreement that this group should received £8,830. A condition is to be added that the Agency are to be provided with times and dates of the project so its progress can be monitored by the Agency.

An Action Plan is to be prepared by the Ulster-Scots Folk Orchestra with the Executive and brought to the Board in Autumn 2007 re: how this project will be further funded.

Proposed and agreed.

On the back of this it was agreed that Mr Millar would provide a report on how musical training in Primary Schools could be co-ordinated to greater effect.

(7) Lower Bann Valley Ulster-Scots Society

Proposal:	£6,600 of £8,850
	“Lower Bann Valley Ulster-Scots Festival 14-18 th August 2007” This festival will run for 5 days and will include Ulster-Scots lectures, introduction to language, talks and a family fun day.

The Board were in agreement that this group should received 75% of the proposed £6,600.

Proposed and agreed.

SPONSORSHIP

(1) Gillian Jones Ulster-Scots Dancers

Proposal:	£4,000 of £5,400
	“Attainment of a Fellowship” The attainment of the Fellowship qualification would enable Gillian to offer tuition to the highest level in Scottish Highland Dance.

The Board were in agreement to defer this application so that the Executive could investigate how the Fellowship would benefit Ulster-Scots Dance.

Proposed and agreed.

(2) Len Graham – Harvest Home

Proposal:	£5,000
	Creation of a book on Joe Holmes (1906-1978) of Ballymoney, Co Antrim

The Board would welcome an application from Mr Graham in relation to the outlined project.

(3) Ulster-Scots Play

Proposal:	£28,075
	This project will include “The Invasion Handbook” and an “Ulster-Scots Play”

The Board were in agreement not to fund this proposed project.

Application from Dr Lawrence Holden in March 2007

Dr Holden informed the Agency that he wished to withdraw his 1st application to the Board that had previously been successful for funding in March 2007 due to fundamental alteration on behalf of the University of Ulster. A 2nd application has now been received by the Agency from Dr Holden.

The Board were in agreement to defer the decision on this application until issues were resolved with the University of Ulster.

**The Board asked that “funding” be an agenda item for discussion at the next meeting.

Action: Executive to draft a paper to bring before the Board

10. Amendments to Financial Assistance Scheme

The Board were in agreement to defer this item to the next meeting as outlined above in item 9.

11. Stranmillis College

Secondary School material

Mr Millar briefed the Board on the current work completed at Stranmillis College. To date there are 46 workbooks produced. Mr Millar suggested that the work be produced onto a new website and tabled tenders for the project. The Board were in agreement to proceed with the tender submitted by Netramedia.

Proposed and agreed.

12. Staffing

Mr Patton informed the board that recruitment for 2 proposed development officers would commence after the summer period.

He also thanked the Agency staff who had attended events over the last few weeks for their assistance.

13. AOB

SEUPB Project Update

Mr Patton briefed the Board on the SEUPB funded library week in May that was a huge success. Library Boards have requested this event to be expanded and aimed at adults as well as school children.

A written report on this project will follow.

Interreg Funding

Executive are to follow up this item as we have received conflicting dates for completed applications to be submitted.

Audit Report

The written report was tabled. The need for travel claims to be made in a timely manner are to be highlighted with Board and staff.

Robert the Bruce 700 (Bushmills)

The event was very successful with the Bushmills residents. It was noted that publicity needs to be addressed for other large scale events that the Agency are to run.

Arts Council Language Officer

Two candidates applied for this position with neither meeting the criteria for interview. It has been agreed that this position will be re-advertised as 2 different 20 hour part-time posts so that all elements of the job description can be met.

Ulster Historical Foundation

It was agreed that the Executive send a letter to the Foundation inviting them give a presentation re: Partnership Working.

Ulster/Virginia Links/Smithsonian

It was highlighted the Mr Thompson will be attending the Smithsonian event that will be taking place in Washington at the end of June 2007.

Belfast/Nashville Event

Invitations were sent to the Board to attend events organised by the Belfast City Council.

Community Radio

This was launched on Friday 15th June 2007 in Newtownards. The first live FUSE fm Radio Show will take place today.

David Healy Coaching

This will take place in Saturday 23rd June 2007 in Newtownards. Four TV companies are interested in televising this event.

The Agency has also secured sponsorship from Irwin's Bakery, RiverRock, Dalefarm, Wilson's Foods, Newsletter and Ards Borough Council.

Summer Schools

Summer Schools will commence on 2nd July 2007. A total in excess of 30 will be held during the summer months.

After Schools Clubs

These are currently running as a pilot scheme in Omagh, Bushmills and Belfast. A review of this project will take place in at the end of June 2007.

Reivers Festival

Raphoe staff are working with community groups in Fermanagh to organise the Reivers Festival which will take place from 6-11th August 2007.

TV Presentation

The Executive are to seek further information on the TV presentation and report back to the Board at the next meeting for a decision.

Ulster-Scots Newspaper

The Board have asked the Executive to add this to the next agenda as an item for discussion.

PR in Dublin

It was noted again that the Agency are to arrange a showcase of Ulster-Scots in Dublin.

The Board were in agreement that the Agency should re-visit links with the Department of Education in Dublin.

13 Date and Venue of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting should take place in Dublin on Wednesday 25th July 2007.

SIGNED:

DATED: