

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
89th Board Meeting
29th May 2009
Ulster-Scots Agency Board Room, Belfast**

Present;	Mr Mark Thompson
	Mrs Angela Graham
	Mr William Humphrey
	Dr Ian Adamson
	Mr William Leathem
	Dr William Roulston
	Dr Aileen Douglas
	Ms Jackie Reed
In attendance:	Mr George Patton
	Mr Michael McCullough
	Mr Arthur Scott
Recording Secretary;	Miss Lyndsey Hanna

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Mr Thompson welcomed everyone to the 89th Board Meeting at the Agency Board Room, Belfast.

2. Apologies

Apologies were tabled on behalf of Mr Jim Millar who was representing the Agency at a DCAL meeting and Mr Michael McCullough who would not be present at the morning part of the meeting.

3. Minutes

The Board accepted the minutes of the previous meeting with some minor amendments needed.

Proposed and Agreed: that the minutes are accepted.

4. Matters Arising

TV Programme

Mr Millar met with the programme producers re: voice over. Currently there is no Broadcasting date confirmed.

Action: Mr Millar to ask for copies for Board Member.

Mr Thompson suggested that the Agency should in the future include in the Agency terms of offer for such funding, that a commitment is required from a Broadcaster before funding will be released for a project of this kind.

Ulster-Scots Folk Orchestra

This issue has now been resolved.

ASM Howarth Report

This report will be tabled at the next Staff meeting.

Community Development Strategy

This will be dealt at Item 9.

Wilderness Road

Tourism Ireland continues to work on this project and have invited Mr Humphrey and Mr Patton to New York in June to meet those involved in this project.

Proposed and Agreed: that Mr Patton and Mr Humphrey attend.

5. Audit Update

The Internal Audit Committee met earlier this morning. Members of the committee gave the Board a brief update. Working is ongoing to ensure that the Agency is meeting all objectives and targets set out.

The Internal Audit Committee advised the Board that the Goldblatt McGuigan Report will be available from 19th June 2009.

Action: All Board to receive a copy and feedback welcomed for the next meeting.

The Chair, Mr Thompson asked that the Language Body Accounts be with Dublin for consolidation possibly before the end of July.

Action: Mr Patton to advise if possible.

Mr Scott left the meeting at this point.

6. Chairman's Report

The Chairman listed the events he had attended and the organisations he had been in contact with since the last meeting.

The Board accepted the report.

Mr Thompson asked that the minutes note his thanks to Mr Patton and Mr Scott for their assistance on producing a Business Report for the Donaghadee Mural proposal, which will not proceed.

Item 9 from the agenda was discussed.

Revised Financial Assistance Scheme

Proposals were tabled, regarding the funding for Community Workers Scheme. Collective approval was given. The Board suggested a timescale and budget for delivery.

Action: This is to be the lead story in the next Ulster-Scots paper, two Ministers are to be invited for comment on the revised scheme and the article is to outline the timetable for deadlines.

7. Report from Executive

Copies of this report were tabled and discussed

Proposed: The Board accepted the report.

The Board adjourned for lunch.

9. Revised Financial Assistance Scheme

The revised scheme received collective approval at item 6.

Further discussion on this matter concluded. Provisions for buying equipment to enhance projects to be written onto page 17 of the revised scheme, also an exception for planned 40 week musical tuition classes – 3 tender quotations should not be needed for the tutor or tendered costs.

Both provisions were collectively agreed by the Board.

10. Grants

Altnaveigh House

Project: Life & Times of John Mitchell

The Board collectively agreed that a decision could not be made as there were insufficient details supplied.

Mr Humphrey left the meeting at this point.

Ulster-Scots Community Network

The USCN Business Plan was tabled and discussed. The Board approved the funding requested. Information on this sent to the Sponsor Departments given the level of funding.

Mr Humphrey returned to the meeting and Mr McCullough joined.

11. Correspondence re: Plantation Masterplan

A paper was tabled on this item.

The proposal outlined the Agency engage a consultant for 5 days work at the cost of £300.00 per day to establish the Agency with the project and help network with all involved.

The Board collectively agreed. Mr Patton to progress this matter.

John McCavitt Proposal

This project previously tabled to the Board cannot be approved until the revised financial assistance scheme has been adopted by the Sponsor Departments.

The Board however, feel this is a worth while project and will advise once the new scheme is implemented.

12. Staffing

The Board were briefed on staffing issues.

13. AOB

Language Promotion Strategy

As Mr Millar was not present at this meeting the Board collectively agreed that the paper was to be emailed to the Board for consideration.

PR Marketing

The new Agency Website is under work and is proposed to be completed by 29 June 2009.

Mr Leathem left the meeting at this point for the day.

Ullans Speakers Association

Mr Patton received a letter from the group offering the Agency a desk in their new premises for the Agency Development Officer in the North. Although grateful of the offer, the Board collectively agreed to decline on this occasion.

Action: Mr Patton and Mr Humphrey to meet with the group and explain the reason why the Agency has declined.

North Antrim Regional Ulster-Scots Hub

The group has offered to make a presentation to the Board to provide further information on the group. Executive advised that the group are looking for Agency funding to develop a Business Plan, however, the Board agreed that a Business Plan be presented to the Board before any funding could be considered.

Irene Knox, CEO, Libraries Northern Ireland

Correspondence was received by Mr Patton and tabled. As Newtownards Library is receiving a refurbishment, Ms Knox has offered the Agency potential display space.

Proposed and agreed; the Executive follow up.

Milwaukee Irish Fest

Approved – Milwaukee Irish Fest. The Board formally adopted the proposals outlined in written procedures.

Central Scotland

Airdrie – Mr Patton was invited to present a paper on Ulster Scots on 6th July to Airdrie Ulster Scots group as part of their festival week. The Board approved this.

DCAL Email

Mr Patton informed the Board that DCAL has received an email complaining about an aspect of the Plantation of Ulster Booklet and CD Rom that the Agency had produced. The Board agreed there was no intent to offend through this publication.

Action: The Agency Board agreed that the CEO write to the Department with clarification on the complaint.

Proposed: It was also agreed by the Board that the Plantation of Ulster theme become the Marketing theme for 2009.

Boat Factory

The Board watched the promotional DVD for the Boat Factory project. The evaluation paper for 2009 project was tabled.

Executive asked the Board for approval to engage with partners and other potential Funders for 2010.

The Board agreed in principal to engage this project further.

The possibility of a drama project on Ulster Scots at the Somme with the Lyric Theatre and Ballywalter Community Association was discussed. The budget was estimated at a maximum of £6000.

The Board approved the project.

Mr Scott rejoined the meeting at this point.

8. Budget and Business Plan Progress.

Due to a new finance system being tested at present, full breakdown of financial figures could not be tabled.

Action: To be emailed to the Board ASAP.

The Board were advised that the potential for Budget cuts remain.

Action: Executive to continue to keep a watching brief.

Ulster-Scots Agency Visitors Centre

In the ASM Howath Report it was suggested that staffing of the centre be outsourced. However, the Board feel that all avenues should be explored.

Action: Executive to examine the risks and benefits for alternative options and create a Business Case to present to the Board.

Executive informed the Board that ROI Departments have implemented a recruitment moratorium.

Action: Executive to find out if this applies to North/South Bodies.

The Chair, Mr Thompson referred to the ongoing work on the Tourist Trails he and other are engaged on in discussion with the Northern Ireland Tourist Board and Tourism Ireland. It was noted that the Agency may need to consider funding the production of the trails.

14. Date and venue of next Meeting

The next Board Meeting will take place on Thursday 25th June 2009 at Foras na Gaeilge Offices.

Signed:.....

Date:.....