

**The Board of Ulster-Scotch
72nd Board Meeting
15th November 2007
Trinity College, Dublin**

Present

Chairman; Mr Mark Thompson
Mr Jim Devenney
Mr Pat Wall
Mr Eddie O'Donnell
Dr Lindy Lunney
Mr Alistair Simpson
Dr Ian Adamson

In attendance

Mr George Patton
Mr Michael McCullough
Mr Jim Millar

Recording Secretary

Miss Sarah Lockhart

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Mr Thompson welcomed everyone to the 72nd Meeting of the Board in Trinity College, Dublin.

2. Apologies

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Mr Stoker.

3. Minutes of Meetings 11th October and 25th October 2007.

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

Proposed and agreed; that both these minutes be accepted.

4. Matters Arising

Letter to NSMC

Mr Patton stated there had been no further developments

Primary School Material

There was some slippage on the timescale but the material would be on the Agency website in early December 2007.

Communications Strategy Progress Report

Mr Patton informed the Board that Miss Gilmore has completed the tendering process for the Agency new branding, with "Mammoth" being the successful company. The approximate costing for this new corporate brand is £17,000. Currently there is a Tender Exercise underway for the re-design of the website. Dr Lunney advised that she would be glad to help Miss Gilmore with this.

Ulster-Scots Tattoo

Mr Patton stated there was an issue with expenditure and that the Agency does not wish to commit a lot of money without partnership funding. The date was originally September 2008 but September 2009 may be a more realistic time.

Summer Schools follow up

Mr McCullough stated that the 2007 Summer Schools were huge successes and he informed the Board of plans for 2 Ulster-Scots Fun Days on 28th December 2007 with the first being held in Banbridge and the other in Omagh. Approximately 500 children will be in attendance at each venue and the cost will be £2,000 - £3,000 for each. The Board approved this.

Action: Mr McCullough to progress.

5. Indicative Budget 2008

The Board were advised of the Indicative Budget figure contained in the Draft Budget for Northern Ireland. This falls short of the figure proposed in our Corporate and Business Plans. The Board expressed disappointment with this and asked the Chair to write on their behalf to the Department.

6. Chairman's Report

Strategy for North America

Mr Thompson stated he had spent 5 days in Ayrshire. He stressed the importance of food in Ulster-Scots culture and perhaps a future project could be based on this.

Television

Mr Thompson also informed the board that a local Production Company had approached the Ulster-Scots Agency with a view to producing fifty, 30 minute long TV Programmes aimed at both American and home audiences. Mr Thompson stated that we would have editorial input.

7. Report from Executive

Joint Language Body Project.

Mr Patton informed the board that Jim Millar and he have been engaged with Foras na Gaeilge regarding the potential for a joint project which would bring together young people from Irish speaking and Ulster-Scots backgrounds.

Action: Jim Millar to take lead on this.

Meeting with Ulster Council GAA

Mr Patton informed the board he had met with the representatives of the Ulster Council. He stated it had been a very positive meeting and recommended that Ulster-Scots Agency continue to progress this. The Board fully supported this idea.

Mr McCullough informed the board of contact he has had with Ulster Rugby regarding 3 possible Ulster-Scots Showcases.

Action: Mr McCullough to progress this.

8. Report from NSMC Meeting

Mr Patton circulated the report from the meeting held in Altnaveigh House , 26th October 2007. The Ulster-Scots Agency presented a 3 year plan on what should happen in the future. The Board welcomed opportunities and recognition by NSMC but reiterated the need for additional finance to implement our strategies and future plans.

9. Budget and Business Plan Progress 2007.

The Progress report was received and accepted.

10. Grants

(1) East Antrim Elementary Accordion Orchestra

Proposal:	£2,470 of £2,950
	“Tuition and Development of Ulster-Scots Music” This project will run for 18 weeks and will include having 3 Ulster-Scots tunes arranged for Accordion Orchestra and tuition for the Orchestra.

The Board were in agreement to only fund £750 for the arrangement of the tunes but that we should not fund any further applications for musical arrangements.

Proposed and agreed.

(2) IUR-fm (Aerwaves Limited)

Proposal:	£4,940 of £6,190
	“Ulster-Scots Radio Programming on IUR-FM” The programme will provide an opportunity for a weekly radio programme to be broadcast on the Ulster-Scots culture over and 80km2 area. This project is proposed to run for one year.

Action: Mr Patton is to meet and discuss with local Ulster-Scots Groups in Newry area and report to the Board.

(3) East Donegal Ulster-Scots

Proposal:	€6,300 of €7,300
	“Researching your ancestry in Donegal (Brochure)” This project will last 4 months with distribution of the product continuous and ongoing. The project will provide a template for Ulster-Scots research in Donegal, identify main sources available, raise the profile Of Ulster-Scots heritage and identify in Donegal.

The Board were in agreement to fund this application for the recommended amount of €6,300.

Proposed and agreed.

(4) The Long Room Hub

Proposal:	€4,528 of €4,528
	This project is a one year project for a research assistant. The project focuses on the preparation for a scholarly addition and ongoing digital curation of the project. As well as a series of additional outcomes designed to promote cross-border scholarly and public interest in early Ulster-Scots life.

The Board asked Mr Millar to discuss this further with Dr Gribben as it was felt that this might come under the role of IUSS

(5) Dr Lawrence Hamilton Holden

Proposal:	£99,760 of £99,760
	This program will provide a historical and ethnological analysis of the traditional craft and culture of a distinct and unique cultural region at the heart of County Antrim. The primary aim of the research is to investigate the breadth and complexity of cultural knowledge and identity within the region through an analysis of specific categories of traditional work, celebration, poetry and song.

The Board were in agreement to fund this application for the recommended amount of £99,760.

Proposed and agreed.

Cairncastle Festival

The Board received a report from Mr Patton and approved remedial action.

11. Financial Assistance Scheme/Funding

Mr Patton suggested to the Board members that the Executive look at funding procedures to potentially reduce community groups.

Action: Board members and Executive to think about this and discuss outcome at next meeting.

12. Staffing

New posts to be filled;

- 2 Development Officers
- Finance Officer
- Grants Officer
- 1 Development Officer (temporary)

Mr Devenney raised the possibility for a Deputy CEO. Mr Thompson stated DCAL rejected this idea earlier in 2007.

The Board reiterated its view that as we approach a new era. A full detailed a staffing review of the Agency would be required urgently, looking at compliment, grading and individual job descriptions.

It was noted that agreement had been received from one of the Sponsor Departments regarding the CEO award.

Radio Consultant

Mr McCullough informed the Board that there was a possibility of engaging a Technician on a 12 month contract on £24,000 per annum. This would be cost effective and a more efficient in terms of output from the Agency. The Board were in agreement that this should be explored further with a view to implementation. Proposed and agreed.

13. Board Appointments

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

14. AOB

Institute of Ulster-Scots

The Review is currently underway.

SEUPB

The report had previously been circulated

World Pipe Band Championships

It was anticipated that Belfast City Council may lead with a bid for this in 2010.

Young Americans

Mr Patton and Mr McCullough have a meeting with Dr Campbell on 16th November 2007. They will report back at the next meeting.

Belfast Visitors Convention and Bureau

The Board were briefed on ongoing discussions.

International Horse Show

Mr McCullough stated it was a huge success and the Ulster-Scots Agency received a great amount of positive coverage as a result.

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

The next Board meeting will take place on Monday 10th December 2007 at a venue in Belfast that is to be confirmed.

Signed:

Dated: