

The Board of Ulster-Scots
A Special Meeting of the Ulster-Scots Agency Board
16th February 2007,
Ulster-Scots Agency, Franklin House,
Belfast

Present Mr Jim Devenney
 Mr Eddie O'Donnell
 Dr Linde Lunney
 Mr Pat Wall
 Mr Alistair Simpson

In attendance: Mr George Patton

Recording Secretary: Miss Lyndsey Hanna

1. Welcome from the Chairman

The Vice Chairman Mr Devenney welcomed the Board members to this special meeting that would deal with language issues.

2. Apologies

Apologies were sent on behalf of Mr Thompson and Dr Adamson.

3. Language

Mr Devenney extended best wishes to Mr Millar, Director of language on behalf of the Board for a speedy recover.

Mr Patton advised that he had visited Mr Millar on 13th February 2007.

The Board were concerned that language issues may be delayed due to Mr Millar's illness but Mr Patton assured the Board that to date Agency staff were covering language issues and keeping things moving.

Action: Board agreed to review this matter at the March meeting.

The Board are keen to move language issues forward and therefore suggested that the Agency fasttrack the post of the Education Officer to assist the Director of Language. Mr Patton informed the Board that although this post has been approved by Sponsor Departments, Mr Millar is needed to create the Job Specification before the post can be filled. There was a feeling that this post may be more appropriate in terms of community education rather than the formal system.

CEO Meeting with NSMC representatives

Mr Patton advised the Board that he had delivered briefing papers as requested outlining the Board views regarding the standardisation process.

Ms Bunting and Mr Hanney are taking this matter seriously and are going to take the issues up with DCAL. The Agency has not been informed of any outcome to date. As no clarification has been received from NSMC the Agency must deliver accordingly as DCAL's instruction still stands.

Action: Mr Patton to inform Board of any outcomes.

Good Friday Agreement

Mr Devenney passed around copies of the Agreement. He outlined that the six established cross border bodies had to work within the parameters set.

Mr Devenney outlined that he felt that the Agency and Foras na Gaeilge that make up the Joint Language Body had not been active enough together to date to promote the Languages.

Mr Devenney also outlined that there was no mention of DCAL in the Good Friday Agreement but Mr Patton clarified that DCAL and DCRGA were the appointed Departments for the Agency to be answerable to in the North and South.

The Board agreed that the Agency needs to develop the Ulster-Scots language orally as well as written in communities as a living language.

IUSS

It was suggested that the Agency look at the IUSS bibliography to see what is available and what has been published. The Agency are also to identify any materials that are out of print that could be used for future language development. From this the Agency need to research how to make this bibliography accessible to the public.

Dr Lunney tabled a paper on the 8 Stage Model for Language. The Board evaluated the Ulster-Scots Language according to this model and felt the Ulster-Scots language was at stage 7/8.

Action: Board to look at this and feedback at next Board meeting.

The Board were keen to identify Ulster-Scots speakers in the community and have these recorded. The material could then be used for an online tuition website on historical Ulster-Scots. In doing this the Agency would be catering for the local and American communities creating a new interest to Ulster-Scots language.

To summarise discussion the Board were in agreement that the key language areas identified at the meeting for inclusion in the Corporate Plan were:

- Stage 8/7 Project and suggested interventions
- Identify out of print materials

- A mechanism to identify strengths of speakers in communities.
- DVD/Website on Ulster-Scots speakers and record them
- Work to improve language status
- Links with Scotland

The Board identified that the resources need to fulfil the summary items will be financial and human resources.

SIGNED:

DATED: