

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
77th Board Meeting
21st April 2008
Tourism Ireland Board Room, Dublin**

Present

Chairman; Mr Mark Thompson
Mr William Humphrey
Ms Jacqui Reed
Dr Aileen Douglas
Dr Ian Adamson

In attendance

Mr George Patton
Mr Michael McCullough
Mr Jim Millar
Mr Gary Blair
Miss Jane Wallace
Miss Gillian Gilmore

Recording Secretary

Lyndsey Hanna

1. Welcome from the Chairman

Mr Thompson welcomed everyone to the 77th Meeting of the Board at the Holiday Inn, Belfast.

2. Apologies

Apologies were accepted on behalf of:

Angela Graham
William Roulston
William Leathem

3. Minutes of last meeting 28.12.08

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

Proposed and agreed; that the minute be accepted.

Mr Patton informed the Board that he had received approval from DCAL for the Agency to proceed with a Staff Review.

Mr Patton has not followed up on a review of HR issues mentioned in the minute. This is an issue for the Board however, Mr Patton will advise the Chair on procedures to take.

4. Matters Arising

Corporate Identity

A presentation will be given later in the meeting.

Straightforward Productions

Executive informed the Board that they are still waiting approval from DCAL to proceed with this project.

Ulster Historical Foundation partnership

Executive informed the Board that they are still waiting approval from DCAL to proceed with this project after presenting them with a business plan.

Education Officer

Executive informed the Board that they are still waiting approval from DCAL to proceed with a down grade from Staff Officer to EO2. The Board advised the Executive to proceed to fill this post at the Staff Officer level.

Board are concerned that DCAL are preventing the Agency move forward with some Projects and Agency issues. The Executive advised the Board that DCRGA work with the Agency proving quick responses at all times. It was proposed that this remark be noted.

Proposed and Agreed.

The Board have asked that Mr Patton provide them with a list of issues that are being held up by DCAL.

Proposed and Agreed.

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:

- His meeting with NSMC re: USA Strategy had been postponed and will now take place on 30th April 2008.
- He spoke with Niall Gibbons after the last Board meeting and he is excited about the agency USA Strategy.
- On 17th April 2008 he met with BBC Scotland in Glasgow. Initial contact was made via Mark Adair.
- Mr Thompson and Mrs Graham met with Mr Edgar Jardine, DCAL
- Meeting with Mark Lusby and Pat Ramsey re: plans for the Ulster Plantation.
- Attended an evening "Who are the Covenanters?"

6. The Covenanters

Mr Thompson tabled a paper to all Board giving a summary of the Covenanters project to date. Suggestions included:

- A Heritage Trail Map that could be distributed to the churches in Ireland;
- Possible partnership for sponsorship with Visit Scotland;
- Coverage on the radio programme “Kist o’ Words”
- Six articles will run in the Belfast Newsletter on the Covenanters in May 2008.

It was suggested that material could be published to bring the story to Sunday schools. A possible art competition could be planned.

Mr Thompson will find out which congregations are active and will refine numbers of the Heritage Trail map accordingly for the next meeting.

7. Report from the Executive

This report was tabled.

Executive highlighted paragraph 1 in their report re: Bursary’s for Dance Teachers. The Board felt that in the long term this will be relevant to Ulster-Scots growth. It was agreed that the Agency should draw up terms and conditions and implement this. **Proposed and Agreed.**

The Irish Football Association has approached the Agency with a view to having Ulster Scots performances at a number of cities where the International team will be playing during the next World Cup qualifying campaign. The potential exists for this to be piloted in Glasgow in August and a meeting has been arranged for May to discuss this. Executive asked that a Board representative attend this meeting. Mr Thompson volunteered.

The Agency is not able to participate in this years Royal Ulster Agricultural Show at Balmoral in May. It would appear that an invitation was sent to DCAL but was declined. Board asked that Executive investigate if the Agency can still attend the show independently.

A new tender has been completed and Goldbaltt McGuigan was been successful to in securing the contact to look after the Agency internal audits.

8. Annual Report

The Executive asked that comments be forwarded by 25th April 2008.

9. Budget and Business Plan

A copy of the progress report was tabled.

The Budgets sheets tabled where analysed by the Board.

The presentation of the Corporate Identity was given to the Board by Mr Thompson. Miss Gillian Gilmore and Miss Jane Wallace joined the meeting at this point.

After the presentation and question, answer session, the Board were in agreement to propose the new Agency Logo. This will be launched at the opening of the Agency new office premises.

Point 11 was dealt with at this point of the meeting.

11. Presentation from Development Officers

Mr Gary Blair gave the Board an overview of his work to date at the Agency follows by Miss Jane Wallace.

The Board retired for lunch.

10. Grant Applications

(1) Bushmills Ulster Scots Heritage

Proposal:	£99,851.53 of £449,554.59
	This project is proposed to run from 1 st July 2008 to 30 th June 2011 (3 years).

The Board were in agreement that there were a lot of elements to this project that the Agency cannot fund.

Action: Executive to meet with group to discuss.

Mrs Reed left the meeting at this point due to a conflict of interests.

(2) East Donegal Ulster-Scots Association

Proposal:	€37,950 of €42,950
	This project is proposed to run from 19 th June to 22 nd June 2008.

This is a festival application which did not go to the Board at the last meeting due to a hold up in the Raphoe Office.

The Executive advised the Board that they needed to query a few elements of this application form. They will do so and report to the board via email. The Board agreed that Executive take this forward.

Mrs Reed returned to the meeting.

This recommendation was accepted by the Board.

Proposed and Agreed.

Lower Bann Ulster-Scots Society

Executive advised that an earlier appeal has already been dismissed. This group have now appealed the Executive decision. The Board were in agreement to proceed with the decision of the executive.

Proposed and Agreed.

Language Awareness Brochure – Dr Clifford Smyth

Executive outlined this project. Board were in agreement for Executive to proceed with talks on this with Dr Smyth.

Titanic Tartan Exhibition

This proposed project will cost £80/90k. The Board agreed that the Executive are to explore this project with other part Funders.

Proposed and Agreed.

Executive tabled the grants manual requested at a previous meeting.

Mr Thompson advised the Board that a response needed to be sent to Mr Edgar Jardine regarding his letter on the Gibson Report.

Action: Mr Patton to supply Board with a copy.

13. Ulster / North America / Scotland links

Mr Thompson gave the Board an overview of the work being composed for this project.

A booklet on this was tabled. The Board were in agreement that this should be launched this campaign after approval had been given by the Minister.

There are two major events happening in America in 2008 that the Agency has been invited to. Executive are to cost and identify possible candidates that could represent the Agency at these events.

14. AOB

SEUPB Update

One of the project officers is off on long term illness. Mr Thompson is helping with the Kiosks to help move this project on.

Office Accommodation

The Board visited the proposed premises over the lunch period. Proposed moving date is 1st June 2008.

The present office accommodation lease in place does not finish until September 2009. Executive have appointed a Solicitor to negotiate with the Agent a get out early clause.

Proposed and Agreed

IUSS

The Institute have an advisory Board consisting of representatives from the Agency and Institute staff. The Board need to nominate 2 appointments to sit on this Board. Board are to consider this and appointments will be made at the May meeting.

Hansard

Mr Simon Burrows contacted the Agency re: an appointment for Ulster-Scots on a full-time basis at the Assembly. Mr Millar is progressing this and will update further at the next meeting.

Summer Schools/After Schools Clubs

There will be a residential weekend that will take place on 23rd and 24th May 2008. At present staff are working on the application form criteria to standardise payments.

Community Radio

The tender closes on 2nd May 2008. This tender invited community groups to participate in the 2008 radio stations.

Young American's Programme

The project is joint with Foras na Gaeilge and the St Patrick's Centre. The search has been narrowed down to 22 possible candidates. This Agency will contribute £10,000 joint funding for the project.

David Healy Fitba Day

Press coverage is ongoing at present in local newspapers. 2,400 children will be involved with tickets being filtered via Councils. Executive will present a full timetable at the next meeting.

Cruise Ships

This is work in progress.

TV Proposal – Language Programme

This programme will be Broadcast in Autumn.

Arts Council Language Officers

Mr Millar will be sitting on the panel to appoint the 2 language officers for the Arts Council project. As of yet there has been no interest in the Ulster-Scots Language Officer post. The Executive proposed that the position be change to an Education officer post for Ulster-Scots rather than language to drum up more interest. The Board were in agreement.

Ulster-Scots Statue

This statue may possibly be placed in a site owned by the NI Housing Executive. This plot is being negotiated at present and the launch is planned for September 2008.

Wilbert Garvin

A educational project was tabled to the Board. The Board were in agreement to explore this.

Proposed and Agreed.

Andersonstown Library

The will be an event taking place in Andersonstown Library on Wednesday 23rd April 2008 and everyone is welcome to attend.

12. Staffing

Director of Culture

This post is to be advertised after the staff review takes place.

Education Officer

If the Agency is to down grade this post, DCAL have advise that the Agency will have to re-apply to Sponsor Departments. The Board agreed that this post should be advertised as Staff Officer level as previously agreed.

Proposed and Agreed.

New Requirements for Office

The Executive outlined that the demand of the new office premise would need a telephonist, receptionist and security.

Mr Patton and Mr Millar left the meeting at this point.

CEO Targets

Copies of the 07/08 Targets we tabled. The scoring of this paper will take place at the next meeting.

Proposals for the 08/09 CEO targets were tabled. Board are to feedback to Mr McCullough before 25th April 2008,

15. Date and Venue of Next Meeting

Bready Ulster-Scots Group has invited the Board to hold their next meeting on Friday 16th May 2008 in their building.

Signed:

Dated: