

USA03/122/14.12.12

Tha Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

Meeting No: 122

Date: 14 December 2012

Paper No: 03/122/14.12.12

Agenda Item: Minutes of 29 November 2012

**Tha Board O Ulster-Scotch
121st Board Meeting
29 November 2012, 10.00am
The Mayor's Parlour, Lisburn Island Centre, Lisburn**

Present:	Mr Tom Scott (Chair)
	Ms Sharon Treacy-Dunne
	Ms Val O'Kelly
	Ms Ida Fisher
	Mr William Leathem
	Mr Tony Crooks
	Mr Trevor Wilson
	Mrs Hilary Singleton
In attendance:	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Mr Jim Millar, Director of Education & Language Mr David McCallum, Staff Officer Accountant
Recording Secretary:	Lyndsey Sullivan

1. Welcome from the Chairperson

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the 121st Meeting of the Board.
- 1.2 The Chair thanked Mayor Leathem for the hospitality and use of the Mayor's Parlour for the meeting. He also thanked his for the invitation to the St Andrew's night on the previous evening and said how it was a great success.
- 1.3 Mr Leathem thanked everyone for attending as advised that he has received positive feedback on the event which was organised in partnership with the Agency.

2. Apologies

- 2.1 All members were present.

3. Minutes of Last Meeting

- 3.1 Minutes of the meeting of the Board on 18 October 2012 were agreed subject to a drafting amendment.

4. Matters Arising from minute of 18 October 2012

4.1 Mr Crozier informed the Board matters arising were covered in the CEO Report.

5. Chief Executive's Report

5.1 Mr Crozier tabled his report. He apologised to the Board for not receiving the report in advance of today's meeting.

5.2 Mr Crozier advised the Board that Departments advised him that Ministers have now agreed a final budget allocation for 2012 which includes a full 6.59% reduction across the allocations of both Sponsor Departments, which will result in a total reduction of £199,656 on the 2011 budget. A new draft business plan has been submitted, which will be presented for approval at the NSMC meeting in December. A draft business plan for 2013 has also been prepared for preliminary consideration of NSMC.

5.3 The Board raised their concerns because they are accountable for irregular spend. The Agency had to work during 2012 on a draft Business Plan that wasn't going to be approved until the end of the financial year once the year spend had been made.

5.4 It was suggested that the Executive gather and set aside the paper trail to date on correspondence asking for the approval of the Business Plan earlier in the year.

5.5 Mr Crozier advised the Board that 2009 Annual Report and Accounts have been signed off and will be laid imminently.

5.5 He also informed the Board that the Agency input to 2010 Annual Report has been completed and translated in anticipation of completion of the Accounts. The 2010 RTTCWG has been received. The Agency remains in dispute with NIAO in relation to two key areas and has sought feedback from Sponsor Departments in relation to these. An additional A&RC is being organised for early December to approve the Management Response before issue to NIAO.

5.6 The Chair advised the Board that he had met with the Chair of Foras na Gaeilge, Liam Ó Maolmhichíl regarding the 2010 Annual Report and agreed that the Joint Language Body should propose to set the timetable of presenting the accounts to the Minister.

5.7 Mr Crozier advised the Board that a business case and post project evaluation to regularise the Agency's occupation of Great Victoria Street has been submitted to Sponsor Departments. Also, the business case for the new office in Raphoe, as agreed by Agency Board in October, has been

signed off and sent to Sponsor Departments for noting. Preparations are well under way for a move in early January.

- 5.8 Mr Crozier informed the Board that the Agency and MAGUS had a successful joint session with the CAL Committee on 25th October. Mrs Singleton asked if the intended plan for the Agency to present a report to the CAL Committee on the Educational Task Force Action Plan would now take place. The Chair advised her that himself, Mr Crozier and Mrs Singleton would take the issue forward.
- 5.9 Information supplied on the Ulster-Scots Strategy and the Ulster-Scots Hairlans was noted.
- 5.10 Mr Crozier advised the Board that the Agency is currently undertaking an evaluation of the tutor programme and working on proposals for the new scheme from 2013 onwards. This new arrangement will be in place by early December. Mr Singleton suggested that the Agency carry out a Cost Benefit Analysis on the programme to assist the evaluation. The Board noted that to date the Tutor's have received a lot of praise on the work they do.

ACTION: *Mr Crozier to table proposal at the next meeting.*

- 5.11 Mr Crozier informed the Board that a number of productive discussions have been held with stakeholders from the Londonderry area in relation to emerging projects for 2013.
- 5.12 Mr Crozier advised the Board that the Agency has agreed to collaborate with MAGUS on a joint initiative to promote the Ulster-Scots heritage of the forthcoming Town Charter Anniversaries during 2013. It was suggested that the Agency invite TIC to participate.

ACTION: *The Chair to circulate the list of towns involved.*

- 5.13 Mr Crozier advised the Board that the Ulster History Circle has agreed to the Agency's request for the erection of blue plaques to 5 prominent Ulster-Scots: David Manson; John McCredy McAlery; James Bryce; WG Lyttle; and Rev. Francis Makemie. The latter will be the History Circle's first blue plaque in the Irish Republic. This project has a potential for the Agency to continue over the years, however, the Agency is to set a criteria to be fulfilled for future requests.

6. Finance Report

- 6.1 Mr McCallum gave an update on this paper. He advised that the revised budget was now in and the unallocated budget was reduced to £30k.

- 6.2 Mr McCallum advised that the Joint Language Body Equality Scheme was currently being drafted and would be ready in the coming weeks. This will follow with an 8 week Consultation Period.

7 Progress Report Update

- 7.1 This paper was tabled and noted.

8 Business Plan for 2013

- 8.1 Mr Crozier talked the Board through the Strategic Priorities.
- 8.2 Under SP1 the Board were in agreement that:
- The Community Worker Scheme name needs revised; in the interim it should have Replacement Scheme added to the title.
 - Words such as 'minimum' and 'at least' to be removed throughout.
- 8.3 Under SP2 the Board were in agreement that:
- All targets be re-worded in this section and throughout the business plan;
 - Targets are to be measured against last year's outcomes;
 - Second Burns event to be added;
 - Targets re: The Gathering to be included;
 - Ensure that the Agency are commemorating appropriate anniversaries in 2013.
- 8.4 The Chair that the Agency set a target for a Promotional and Marketing Strategy to be written for the Agency in the 2013 Business Plan.
- 8.5 Under Sp4 the Board were in agreement that:
- A note to be added that the Audit committee meet 4 times yearly
 - A target is to be set and training arranged for Audit & Risk Committee members to receive formal training.

ACTION: *Mr Crozier to amend the 2013 Business Plan as above and circulate to Board.*

9 Update on Suspected Fraud Cases

- 8.1 Mr Millar's provided the Board with an update.

10. Marketing Report

9.1 The Chair highlighted that the Agency would be hosting two Robert Burns Events over consecutive nights. He suggested that Board representatives attend alternative evenings.

ACTION: *Mr Crozier to make a proposal for the next Board meeting.*

9.2 Mr Scott informed the Board that he has received indicitive costs from the Cross Border Orchestra. However, he has requested revised costs and is awaiting these to be re-submitted.

9.3 Mr Crozier advised the Board that the Festival of Marching Bands which the Agency where joint sponsors of has taken place on 15 November 2013 and was a very successful evening.

9.4 The Board noted the report.

11 Policies

10.1 The Board noted that the policies listed were to be approved at the December 2012 meeting.

12 Monreagh Ulster-Scots Heritage Centre

12.1 This paper has been postponed until the December Board meeting.

13 RSPBA NI

13.1 Mr Wilson and Mr Treacy-Dunne declared a possible conflict of interest. However, the Chair declared there was no conflict and to proceed with the item.

13.2 Mr Millar outlined the proposal and declared he was in support of the £20 proposal for funding as it met the Agency criteria for funding.

13.3 The Board approved this application.

14 Community Workers Scheme

- 14.1 The Community Workers Scheme paper was tabled. It outlined that the Agency are currently funding 9 part time administration workers. The review showed that the current scheme was not currently fulfilling what it was intended to do.
- 14.2 The executive proposed that the scheme be extended for a further 3 months until March 2013 until new arrange or a replace scheme was in place.
- 14.3 The Executive asked the Board to consider a proposed replacement scheme which would funded Community Workers and associated costs rather than and administration worker.
- 14.4 The Board are to consider the paper tabled and a decision would be made at the January 2013 Board.
- 14.5 The Chair suggested that the Executive so consider a Community Development Strategy going forward.

ACTION: *Mr Crozier*

ACTION: *Mr Crozier to prepare a further paper on the matter offering alternatives for the Board to consider.*

- 14.5 In the interim the Board agreed for interim funding to be put in place.

15 Joint Projects

15.1 CS Lewis Publication

Mr Millar briefed the Board on this project. The total cost to the Agency would be £10k an the project will commence in January 2013. The Board approved this project.

16 Reports

16.1 Stone Mountain Highland Games

Mr Millar gave the Board an update on the Agency trip to Stone Mountain Highland Games which he, Mr Derek Reaney and Mrs Singleton attended.

- 16.2 Great relationships were built at the event and positive working connections made.

- 16.3 Mr Singleton told the Board that Mr Millar was an excellent ambassador for the Agency during the trip and that the Agency had a valued presence at the event.
- 16.4 Mrs Singleton suggested that the Agency needs to focus on marketing materials of interest to the American market such as heritage trails and surname history.
- 16.5 The Chair was impressed with the report and the connections built with follow up action points.
- 16.5 He also suggested that the Agency website needs to have an American friendly section eg genealogy and that the Agency needs to set aside time at a future Board meeting to discuss international links.

ACTION: *Mr Crozier to plan discussion for a future meeting and invite PRONI.*

16.6 Education Conference, Friday 9 November 2012

Mr Millar gave thanks to Miss Wallace, Education Officer for the work in organising the conference and the launch of the new Flagship School Programme.

- 16.7 The Agency received a lot of positive feedback and it also validated the Agency work over the years.
- 16.8 Strategy for Ulster-Scots Language, Heritage and Culture**
The Board noted the Agency response and agreed to submit to DCAL.

17. Date of Next Meeting

- 17.1 The next Board meeting will take place on **Friday 14 December 2012** in Dublin at Foras na Gaeilge premises which will be followed by a Joint Language Body meeting in the afternoon.

ACTION: *Board to feedback travel requirements and Mrs Sullivan to arrange.*

- 17.2 Apologies for the next meeting were received from Mrs Treacy-Dunne, Mrs Fisher, Mr Wilson and Mr Leathem.
- 17.3 The Chair advised the Executive that the Board have been receiving board papers too close to the meeting date and agreed that all papers should be with them no later than 1 week in advance of the meeting date. If papers did not meet the deadline they will be carried over to the next scheduled meeting.

17.4 Mrs Singleton reminded the Board that travel expenses needed submitted within a maximum of 3 months of expenses occurring.

Signed:

Dated: