

ULSTER SCOTS AGENCY

BUSINESS PLAN AND BUDGET 2009

Introduction

This Business Plan describes the work, which the Ulster-Scots Agency proposes to undertake during 2009 in terms of implementation of the various programmes and projects set out in the Agency's Corporate Plan 2008 – 2010. Whilst building on the success of previous Corporate and Business plans to further develop ongoing work and to ensure the Agency meets its legislative remit this plan continues the theme of consolidation. The plan will enable the Agency to fulfil its mission to promote the study, conservation, development and use of Ulster-Scots as a living language; to encourage and develop the full range of its attendant culture; and to promote an understanding of the history of the Ulster-Scots”

OVERVIEW OF WORK TO DATE

The Ulster-Scots Agency programme of work in the first year of this Corporate Plan period has been based on four strategic themes which reflect our focus on delivery namely:

- Marketing
- Serving the Community
- Working with Others
- Commitment to a First Class Service

As a promotional Agency marketing is at the core of our remit. The Agency has in place a public relations strategy which continually strives to ensure that the public are informed of Ulster-Scots issues. During 2008 the Agency website was dramatically amended to reflect more clearly the work undertaken by the Agency and to provide information in a more effective and efficient manner. This is central to the success of the public relations strategy. It is realistic, however to acknowledge that much work remains to be done. The Agency continues to produce a range of information leaflets and other publications, and hosts a number of other specific themed websites. The relocation of the Agency Headquarters with a “shop front” access for the public has also provided further opportunities to market Ulster Scots. We are very aware of the importance of communication and we will continue to build on this success over the next two years.

Following on from the success in 2007 of the Ulster Scots summer schools we were able to increase the level of engagement with young people through this medium as we continued to provide opportunities to “learn through fun” In a similar vein the annual David Healy Fitba Day provided a massive opportunity to engage young people through the medium of football and the endorsement of an iconic figure like David Healy. Events such as this offer an opportunity to bring Ulster Scots culture and language to an audience that

might otherwise be difficult to reach. It was particularly pleasing to note the number of organisations particularly local Councils who were keen to partner the Agency in this and again this provides opportunities to build relationships and further partnership working in other areas. A new initiative developed in pilot form was the provision of Ulster Scots “after school clubs” and the enthusiasm for this from the primary school sector has been overwhelming and must be built on.

The Agency through its grant aid and sponsorship schemes continues to support groups and organisations in the development of Ulster-Scots culture. Over the last few years the major areas of growth have been in dance and musical tuition. We have been encouraged by the variety of projects that groups are initiating and becoming involved with and we hope to increase this level of activity even further. Again over the last year we have been more proactive, through the work of the Development Officers in assisting the community to further develop but we are conscious that much work remains to be done and there is a clear deficit remaining in terms of community capacity. In 2008 we initiated a new Development grant to help address this issue and this will remain a feature of the Agency’s work going forward. Likewise the Agency introduced tranche funding for festivals in an attempt to assist the community in the planning process and to ensure there were greater opportunities for publicity. Whilst we will persevere with this the difficulties surrounding the capacity for the Ulster Scots community largely led by volunteers to meet the requirements of this form of funding should not be ignored.

As a result of funding from SEUPB we employed staff to work on a specific project engaging Councils, Libraries and Schools. This project ended in July 2008 and has proven successful. Again going forward it is important that the Agency avails of the relationships made and ongoing opportunities.

The Agency recognises that there are challenges to be met if it is to achieve its objectives. In meeting these the Agency will:

- Encourage and develop the Ulster-Scots culture
- Promote an understanding of the Ulster-Scots heritage
- Develop the capacity within the Ulster-Scots community
- Promote the study of the Ulster-Scots language
- Promote the conservation of the Ulster-Scots language
- Promote the development and use of Ulster-Scots as a living language

Through the implementation of this plan the Ulster-Scots Agency will contribute to a revival of awareness and appreciation of the rich and diverse linguistic and cultural heritage of our society.

The Agency recognises the level of resources required if the Agency is to fulfil its remit and provide high quality service on linguistic and cultural issues to an ever increasing community demand, realising the Ulster Scots potential and this plan has been written accordingly.

Accordingly, this Plan is based on a budget allocation of £3,540,000 for 2009 which shall be allocated by the Northern Ireland Administration and the Irish Government.

In the table below the budget allocation is broken down for the 2009 year into the Agency's key current strategic themes and Staff/Running Costs.

2009 Ulster Scots Agency Programme Expenditure

Strategic Themes	Profiled Budget
Marketing	£673,800
Serving the Community	£1.260,000
Working with Others	£300,000
Commitment to a First Class Service / Staff / Running Costs	£1,200,000
Total	£3,433,800

The 2009 Budget has been profiled to produce a planned breakdown based on experience and monitoring of the Agency budget. The budget includes a 3% overall budget efficiency saving.

The Corporate Plan for 2008 -2010 is designed to build on the success of Agency support for community initiatives with an Ulster Scots dimension which can assist in establishing community cohesion.

The Corporate Plan is built on the following strategic themes:

MARKETING

The Ulster Scots Agency has at its core a promotional remit. Promotion comes in many forms and it is accepted that every aspect of the Agency's work involves promotion whether it be through publications, grant assisted activity or delivering a service to other organisations. However central to all of this is a marketing and information strategy that involves the optimum use of resources to inform and educate people about Ulster Scots both in general and more specific terms.

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

The Agency recognises the need to protect and grow our cultural capital and is extremely conscious of the importance of cultural activity to people. The Ulster Scots community is at a stage of development that requires careful nurture and a coherent strategy to enable that community to fully develop and achieve its potential.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

If the Agency is to succeed in encouraging as many people to engage in Ulster Scots activities either as participants or audience/spectators it is essential to establish partnerships with key organisations.

The Agency recognises that it alone cannot meet the needs of the Ulster Scots community and we are therefore committed to building relationships with Government Departments, Statutory and voluntary Agencies and others who have a role to play

COMMITMENT TO A FIRST CLASS SERVICE

The Agency considers itself to be a service provider. To ensure that we offer a first class service to our stakeholders and partners we will strive to ensure that our processes and procedures operate effectively and efficiently.

Programmes and Activities for 2009

This Business Plan for 2009 is aligned with the Corporate Plan 2008 – 2010 in relation to the themes; however the allocation of the budget between the strategic themes of the Agency has of necessity been profiled to best meet the evolving business needs of the Ulster Scots Community. This Plan defines the programme of work, which will translate these themes into actions. The resources, objectives, key deliverables, targets and impact associated with the programme are outlined in the Plan which is based on a budget of £3,433,800 for 2009.

The Plan will be subject to review during the course of 2009 to ensure it remains relevant, realistic and achievable. The Board will undertake this on a quarterly basis and progress reports will be presented to the sponsor Departments. The Board will also monitor progress against targets and objectives and regular progress reports will be presented to sponsor Departments.

1. MARKETING

Aim

The Ulster Scots Agency has at its core a promotional remit. Promotion comes in many forms and it is accepted that every aspect of the Agency's work involves promotion whether it be through publications, grant assisted activity or delivering a service to other organisations. However central to all of this is a marketing and information strategy that involves the optimum use of resources to inform and educate people about Ulster Scots both in general and more specific terms. The Agency has developed a comprehensive Communications strategy which encompasses all aspects of promotion and this will provide the template for delivery.

Financial Allocation from the 2009 Budget

£673,800

Objectives

- Engage in advertising campaigns through a variety of mediums to promote general awareness, by theme or specific event
- Organise events to showcase Ulster Scots
- Maximise the potential of Agency websites and the use of information technology
- Publish information leaflets, CDs DVDS etc.
- Publish a regular newspaper and contribute articles to other publications
- Maintain a good working relationship with the media
- Issue press releases and have personnel available for interviews as necessary
- Conduct briefing meetings for opinion formers and key figures
- Organise Ulster Scots Community Radio Stations
- Support Ulster Scots programming on TV and Radio

Targets for 2009

- Publish a minimum of 8 editions of the Ulster Scot newspaper during the year
- Produce one CD or DVD by October 2009
- Conduct one major marketing campaign to highlight a specific element of Ulster Scots' language, culture or heritage
- Organise two showcase events within the year
- Interactive website development and the streaming of broadcast programmes
- Organise five community radio stations on a short term licence basis by December 2009
- Host two briefing events for the media by October 2009
- 5000 visitors to the new shop front location by December 2009
- Produce two information or historical leaflets and reprint existing leaflets as necessary
- Participate at two major sporting or other general events by showcasing Ulster Scots
- Organise two seminars by May 2009 to assist local groups to be more effective in marketing their events

Impact

Increased awareness and understanding of the history, culture, heritage and language of the Ulster Scots.

Measure

Survey of the public's awareness and understanding of the Ulster Scots history, language and culture.

2. SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Aim

The Agency recognises the need to protect and grow our cultural capital and is extremely conscious of the importance of cultural activity to people. The Ulster Scots community is at a stage of development that requires careful nurture and a coherent strategy to enable that community to fully develop and achieve its potential.

We will continue to work with community organisations to ensure they fulfil that potential in linguistic activity, music, dance, literature, drama and the visual arts, helping people to unlock their creativity.

The development of active participation by community groups, organisations and individuals in linguistic and cultural activity will be a major feature of the Agency's work over the period of this plan.

To ensure this the Agency will work with and provide financial assistance through grant aid or sponsorship to a wide variety of Ulster Scots groups, community organisations and individuals in line with our Financial Assistance Scheme.

We will also provide sustained training opportunities which will deliver programmes to improve community infrastructure and build capacity within the Ulster Scots community.

In addition to the financial support provided to community groups, organisations and individuals provided directly by the Agency we will work with these groups to assist them in drawing down funding from Government Departments and other funding bodies for Ulster Scots activities.

Financial Allocation from the 2009 Budget

£1,260,000

Objectives

- The growth and development of musical tuition including dance both in the community and through the education system
- Support for language projects
- The provision of Ulster Scots literature in the community, libraries and the education system
- Encourage and promote opportunities for people to engage in a range of activities such as storytelling, drama and re-enactment
- Support research into Ulster Scots history, heritage and the wider cultural resource both at academic and community level. This will include research into the impact Ulster Scots and the Diaspora made on the world and the impact of migration to the “new world” on those who stayed in Ulster
- The provision of opportunities for performers to excel in their chosen field and to showcase the available talent in appropriate arenas and venues
- The development and expansion of “Summer Schools” and “After Schools Clubs”
- The provision of training and support to increase the capacity and skills of voluntary groups and organisations
- Encourage more young people to engage in Ulster Scots activity
- Exploration of the links between Scotland and Ireland including language, history and culture
- The maintenance of a database of performers etc that can be provided to groups

Targets for 2009

- To monitor activity and target potential areas where there is limited cultural activity and develop a programme to target cultural and community groups in those areas with grant aid and sponsorship to support a greater geographic spread of events and increase first time applicants in areas currently under-represented by 7% based on the 2008 figures
- Provide support for young people to develop their skills in Ulster Scots music and culture which will increase the number of young people engaged in Ulster Scots activity by 7%(based on the 2008 figures) in 2009
- Provide support for 35 language based summer schools (with cultural input) to be held in 2009
- Provide support for music and dance tuition which will increase the number of people engaged in tuition by 5% (based on the 2008 figures) in 2009
- Organize a major Ulster Scots festival by September and engage with and support the community to deliver ten community festivals during 2009 including two in each area served by a Development Officer
- Plan and implement two conferences / seminars by May 2009 to address confidence and capacity building measures in the Ulster Scots community
- Publish or reprint two pieces of Ulster Scots literature by November 2009 and distribute to libraries
- Roll out a series of storytelling opportunities across forty libraries or schools by December 2009
- Provide support for twenty after schools clubs by June 2009
- Provide support for three drama or re-enactment projects by November 2009
- Provide support for three research programmes on the Ulster Scots Diaspora by December 2009

- Support three projects which examine the links between Ulster and Scotland and or Ulster and North America
- Evaluate customer satisfaction in relation to Agency assistance towards cultural development
- Provide two training opportunities for performers to excel in their chosen field.
- Provide an opportunity for new talent to participate in a showcase performance
- Plan and implement eight seminars to provide advice on funding opportunities and related training to equip groups to avail of funding
- Assist five Ulster Scots groups to access other sources of funding for major projects by November 2009. Develop two community events by August 2009 that specifically add to the visitor experience

Impact

Increased growth in the number and activities of Ulster-Scots groups, greater participation on Ulster Scots cultural and linguistic activities and better public awareness of the unique nature of the Ulster-Scots community.

Measure

Through the medium of the Omnibus Survey and other possible sources, monitor the level of participation in, and the level of awareness of Ulster-Scots activities. Use internal management statistics to monitor activity levels.

Following a review of the work of the Ulster-Scots Heritage Council (USHC), the Agency approved core funding for USHC for a 3 year period commencing 1st June 2008. The Agency will make available funding of up to £310,000* to the USHC for 2009. The Council will continue to engage in vital work in terms of representation, capacity building and developing community cohesion in

addition to the ongoing project work such as the provision of speakers and materials, exhibitions, festivals etc. A review of the work of the Council will be carried out by June2009

* This is subject to satisfactory review of the work of the Heritage Council

3. WORKING WITH OTHERS

Aim

If the Agency is to succeed in encouraging as many people to engage in Ulster Scots activities either as participants or audience/spectators it is essential to establish partnerships with key organisations.

The Agency recognises that it alone cannot meet the needs of the Ulster Scots community and we are therefore committed to building relationships with Government Departments, Statutory and voluntary Agencies and others who have a role to play.

The Agency will provide advice to Ministers and Government Departments North and South and to the North/South Ministerial Council on issues of policy and strategy.

It will be a facilitator for the mainstreaming of Ulster Scots.

There is a need for Ulster Scots to be available within the formal education system as part of the curriculum and the Agency will work with the relevant Departments and organisations North and South to deliver this. It is recognised that the Agency will not have responsibility for the development of language programmes to examination level in schools and ultimately to degree level. The Agency will therefore focus on history and heritage. Initially this will be a feature of the history curriculum but will also cross into other themes such as geography and citizenship. It is not intended that the Agency be other than a persuader for this though where appropriate the Agency may make resources available for this to be achieved.

The Agency will also work with individual schools, colleges and universities to promote academic study of Ulster Scots.

It is widely recognised that cultural tourism is a vitally important component to the economy of both jurisdictions. It is equally important in the growth and development of communities. The Agency will therefore work with Tourism Ireland, NITB, Failte Ireland and all relevant agencies to improve the visitor experience by supporting Ulster Scots activity which will add value to visitor and resident alike.

Ulster Scots influence is all around us including “built heritage”. The Agency will therefore engage with organisations such as the Environment and Heritage Service to develop greater awareness of this aspect of the heritage. During the period of the Corporate Plan we will witness the 400th anniversary of one of the defining moments in our shared history – The Plantation of Ulster. The Agency will draw upon the experience from the anniversaries of The Hamilton and Montgomery Settlement and The Flight of The Earls to provide leadership in commemorating this anniversary and will work with local Councils and voluntary and statutory bodies to ensure that the commemorations are appropriate and timely.

The Agency recognises the important role to be played by the Ulster Scots Heritage Council and will provide core funding to that organisation during the period of this plan.

We have a close working relationship with colleagues in Foras na Gaeilge and this is evidenced in the various joint projects organised by the Language Body.

Financial Allocation from the 2009 Budget

£300,000

Objectives

- Explore issues around migration. Key partners may include the Ulster Historical Foundation and the Centre for Migration Studies but will also involve the community, academics and academic Institutions
- Work with Government and other agencies to increase awareness of the impact of the Ulster Scots on the built heritage and landscape
- Engage with the community and Statutory Bodies to create and develop Ulster Scots content to the visitor experience
- In relationship with organisations such as the Arts Council the Agency will contribute to the development of art in public places
- Work with the Education Authorities to aid the development of Ulster Scots history in the curriculum
- Provide leadership to ensure the success of the commemorations of the 400th anniversary of the Plantation
- Work with Government Departments, Statutory Agencies and other bodies to highlight the relevance and importance of Ulster Scots to the work they are engaged in
- The organisation of joint projects with Foras na Gaeilge under the umbrella of the Language Body each year.

Targets for 2009

- Contribute to one major conference or seminar on migration by December 2009
- A measured improvement in the amount of Ulster Scots material on the curriculum
- A measured positive response to the commemorative events around the anniversary of the Plantation
- Support a project which considers the impact of the Ulster Scots on the built heritage by October 2009

- Support a project which considers the impact of Ulster Scots on industrial heritage by November 2009
- Organise two events in 2009 that will inform the general public about the Plantation and specifically the Scottish element of this
- Organise an “Ulster Scots Book week” by June 2009
- Ensure that the tourism product contains an Ulster Scots element
- Increase the Ulster Scots element in Museums
- Organise three projects during 2009 as the Language Body

Impact

Greater awareness within the community of the impact of the Ulster Scots.

Measures

Survey of the public’s awareness and understanding of the Ulster Scots history, language and culture and their impact on the landscape.

4. COMMITMENT TO A FIRST CLASS SERVICE

Aim

To provide support to the Board in its work in taking forward the Mission of the Ulster Scots Agency through the Corporate and Business Planning process and to provide effective and efficient financial and administrative systems for the Agency.

The Agency considers itself to be a service provider. To ensure that we offer a first class service to our stakeholders and partners we will strive to ensure that our processes and procedures operate effectively and efficiently.

The Agency is part of the North /South Language Body and as such recognises and accepts the need to ensure that all its policies, actions and programmes comply with the overall policies and legal requirements of the Government of the United Kingdom and the Government of the Republic of Ireland.

Staff / Running Costs

Financial Allocation from the 2009 Budget

£1,200,000

Objectives

- Increase the overall level of client satisfaction
- Ensure that all correspondence is dealt with effectively and efficiently within the timescales prescribed
- Ensure that all legislative requirements are met on time
- Increase overall client satisfaction with the grant application process

- Corporate and business plans
- Annual report
- Annual accounts and their audit
- Address all outstanding audit issued by the end of December 2009
- Ongoing review of the manual of procedures
- Provide efficient and effective support to the Board
- Staff management and appraisal procedures
- Staff and Board member training

Targets for 2009

- Draft Annual report prepared by March 2009
- Draft Annual accounts prepared for audit by March 2009
- Business Plan for 2010 completed and agreed by September 2009
- Manual of procedures reviewed and updated by October 2009
- Ongoing compliance with statutory requirements within agreed timescales
- Address all outstanding audit issued by the end of December 2009
- Achieve a 'Satisfactory' audit result in 2009
- Systems of internal control – including internal audit
- Review systems to evaluate activities to demonstrate value for money by September 2009
- Review systems to evaluate satisfaction levels of staff service delivery by June 2009
- Completion of all staff appraisal reports by June 2009
- Review of staff training plan for the Agency by March 2009
- Review and evaluation of Education Officer Role by June 2009
- Achieve 80% overall client satisfaction
- All correspondence to be acknowledged within five working days
- Process 90% of all grant applications within three weeks of receipt of completed application
- Achieve 90% client satisfaction with the grant application process

Impact

To increase effectiveness and efficiency and to ensure that the Agency achieves its mission to the satisfaction of its stakeholders

Measure

Survey of stakeholders. Including client satisfaction survey

The staffing structure, which the Agency expects to have in place by the end of 2009*, is:

- 1 CEO (Grade 7)
- 3 Directors – Culture, Language and Education and Corporate Services (D.P.)
- 4 Development Officers (S.O.)
- 1 Finance and Administration Manager (S.O.)
- 1 Information and Communications Officer (S O)
- 1 Education Project Officer (S O)
- 1 Grants Officer (EO2)
- 1 Finance Officer (EO2)
- 1 Personal Assistant (A.O.)
- 1.5 Administrative Officers (A.O.)- - 1 based in Belfast 0.5 based in Raphoe

*This is subject to an organisational review to be carried out during 2009

Ulster Scots Agency
68/72 Great Victoria Street
Belfast
BT2 7BB

ANNEX C

Corporate/Business Plan Summary - Proposed 2009 Budget Allocation Pro forma

North South Body	Agreed Budget 2008			Proposed Change +/-			Proposed Budget 2009		
	Current	Capital	Total	Current	Capital	Total	Current	Capital	Total
€1 = £0.78									
Programme									
1. Marketing			465k			218.8k			673.8k
2. Serving the Community			1500k			-240k			1260k
3. Working with others			500k			-200k			300k
Total Programme Expenditure			£2.465m			-£221.2k			£2.2338m
Pay Costs			425k			75k			500k
Pension Costs			75k			5k			80k
Non Pay Administration Costs			350k			270k			620k
Total Administration Costs			850k			350k			1200k
Overall Total Expenditure (Programme & Administration)			£3.315m			£118.8k			£3.4338m
Existing/Projected Staff Numbers			18/?						18/?
Narrative to support expenditure figures:									

Note: The above pro forma should be completed in the operating currency of the Body.

Corporate/Business Plan Summary - Proposed 2008 Budget and Indicative Allocations Pro forma

North South Body	Proposed Budget 2008			Indicative Budget 2009			Indicative Budget 2010		
	Current	Capital	Total	Current	Capital	Total	Current	Capital	Total
€1 = £0.78									
Programme									
1. Marketing			465k			673.8k			390k
2. Serving the Community			1500k			1260k			1600k
3. Working with others			500k			300k			237.6k
Total Programme Expenditure			£2.465m			£2.2338m			£2.2276m
Pay Costs			425k			500k			550k
Pension Costs			75k			80k			90k
Non Pay Administration Costs			350k			620k			460k
Total Administration Costs			850k			1200k			1100k
Overall Total Expenditure (Programme & Administration)			£3.315m			£3.4338m			£3.3276m
Existing/Projected Staff Numbers			18			18			20
Narrative to support expenditure figures:									

Note: The above pro forma should be completed in the operating currency of the Body