



Ulster-Scots Agency

Boord o Ulstèr-Scotch

Board Decisions 2024

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23rd February 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
219th Board Meeting
11am, Hybrid Meeting

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)	<i>FK</i>
	Lavinia Tilson	<i>LT</i>
	Allen McAdam	<i>AA</i>
	Trevor Wilson	<i>TW</i>
	Karyn Devenney	<i>KD</i>
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, Chief Executive	<i>IC</i>
	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services	<i>KS</i>
	Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)	<i>LE</i>
Apologies:	None	
Recording Secretary:	Alison Morgan (P.A to C.E.O)	<i>AM</i>

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
FK welcomed everyone to the 219th meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
None noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting on 11th December 2023 were approved. Members noted that the improved format of the minutes now better captured the key areas of discussion.
5. **Matters Arising**
There were no matters arising.
6. **Progress Reports**

6.0 Progress Report Against Business Plan 2023 (Final Outturn)

IC presented the 2023 Final Outturn Progress Report with overall achievements of each strategic aim discussed. The Board noted a very successful year given the staffing issues of 2023.

6.1 Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024

IC presented the 2024 Progress Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Key highlights:

- 1.2 Culture Calendar events - increased social media exposure, Burns week and Colerain Resolves.
- 1.6 Partnering with the Somme Association in relation to a permanent VC Exhibition.
- 1.19 Kelvin 200 - Institute of Physics have confirmed they are partnering with the Agency for A Level (NI) and Leaving Certificate (ROI) competition.
- 1.20 Partnering with Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council for Armed Forces Day end of June.
- 1.21 John Hewitt Society relating to Weavers Poets
- 2.15 Richard Parkes MBE Majors Masterclass – this programme was oversubscribed with a waiting list being created for future programmes of work. It was highlighted that there were applications received from outside Ulster.
- 2.23 Youth Grants Programme and BB.
- 3.1 Opportunities for collaborating with the Chinese Welfare and QUB JSoc (Jewish Society).

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by KS, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

KS gave an update on the finalisation of 2023 Internal Audit with a follow-up (remote) site visit due for the w/c 26th February (change to date from papers issued). Paperwork is now with CPD for the procurement for a new internal Audit contract.

Annual Accounts

2022 Accounts have now been laid and are awaiting finalisation.

2023 Planning was postponed with the Lead Auditor however, hopefully this will be rescheduled soon.

Legal Action

This is with the Claimant's Solicitors and will be dealt with through the case management hearing.

Annual Budget

KS noted that the ROI transition funding from 2023 will be rolled forward to 2024.

Performance Actual Vs Budget

The report was discussed and noted by the Board. It was noted that the budget does include for aspirational spends (such as staffing) as set against the business plan and this will evolve as the year progresses resulting in spend or rebudgeting exercises.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board. It was highlighted that the absence figure recorded is inclusive of Agency staff.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The following policies were approved by the Board:

- Safeguarding
- Travel & Subsistence
- General Data Protection Principles
- Event Policy.

7.2 Audit & Risk Committee

The updated Terms of Reference for the Committee were approved by the Board with no major changes to the content noted.

7.3 Disposals

A disposals schedule was presented to the Board by KS. The records noted were approved for confidential disposal.

7.4 Risk Management Summary

KS presented a summary report which provided members with an overview of our internal financial controls and internal audit processes. The paper was noted by the Board.

8. Marketing Report

IC presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Social Media engagement and reach figure was 680.3% up on last reporting period and included 'Word of the Day' likes.
- Benchmarked report compared to Foras na Gaeilge figures.
- Burns Week -Events and dressing.
- Christmas Jingle on U105.

9. Education Report

IC presented the Education Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights included collaborating with Doagh Primary School.

10. CEO Report

IC presented the CEO report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Return of the NI Executive, implications on NSMC and subsequent impacts to Board appointments.
- HR Issues – Recruitment & live posts.
 - A Terms of Reference for an organisational review will be brought to the Board then presented to the Sponsor Departments.
 - Business Cases for additional posts will be approved by Sponsor Departments, brought to the Board then to NSMC.
- Accommodation – the remainder of the terms of the Agency's lease was discussed. The Agency have instructed for concept design plans (with indicative layouts including costings) for the Corn Exchange Building to be drawn up.
- Shared Island Initiative – The Agency has now been advised technical assistance can be sought in terms of drafting business cases for Shared Island applications.
 - €2.5 million has been announced for Irish and Ulster-Scots but funding was issued to North-West Culture Partnership.

- Agency is happy to discuss lack of awareness in relation to funding and how the Ulster-Scots funding may be spent/issued.
- ROI Capital Funding.
- Visit from Minister Patrick O'Donovan TD – was a hugely positive meeting.
- Safeguarding the Union Command Paper – a meeting took place with Sir Jeffrey Donaldson MP discussing the matters relating to relevance of Ulster-Scots Agency in particular workstreams with USA, East-West Council and some educational workstreams.
- Visit from Minister Gordon Lyons MLA – taking place 28th February 2024.
- Boston Tea Party – Full report will be provided to the next Board Meeting.
- UNESCO Convention for Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage.
- PSNI Consultative Forum.
- Festival Funding.
- COMEX Visit.

11. AOB

- Peace Campus official opening date has been brought forward to 10th May 2024.
- Burns Week Images were noted by the Board.

12 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 28th March 2024 (11am) in person.

28th March 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
220th Board Meeting
11am, Hybrid Meeting

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)	FK
	Lavinia Tilson	LT
	Allen McAdam	AA
	Trevor Wilson	TW
	Karyn Devenney	KD
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, Chief Executive	IC
	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services	KS
Apologies:	None	
Recording Secretary:	Alison Morgan (PA to CEO)	AM

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
FK welcomed everyone to the 220th meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
None noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting on 23rd February 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.
6. **Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024**

IC presented the 2024 Progress Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Key highlights:

- 1.6 Permanent VC Exhibition – launch planned for 17th April 2024. Invitation to issue to members.
- 1.8 Blue Plaque agreed for 6th June 2024 (D-Day 80th Anniversary).
- 1.14 TG4 introductory meeting took place – the channel is interested in airing Ulster-Scots content. Follow-up meeting planned for September 2024.
- 2.15 Richard Parkes MBE Pipe Majors Masterclass – programme scheduled for 6th & 20th April. A second course to be discussed.
- 2.23 Youth Grants Programme and BB. We will monitor progress.
- 3.4 East/West School Twinning Programme – Reivers Festival took place (week ending 22nd March 2024) which had very successful engagement by school children from Co.Fermanagh. Accommodation issue discussed with members. Any further update or risk will be brought to Board.

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by KS, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

KS gave an update on the finalisation of 2023 Internal Audit. It was also noted that the new contract was due to start in April for the 2024 schedule.

Annual Accounts

2022 Accounts still awaiting finalisation.

2023 Draft Annual Report issued to the Board for consideration and approval to issue onwards to the Sponsor Departments.

Legal Action

KS noted that she hoped to have an update on the case management hearing. KS agreed to follow-up on a historical fraud case and provide update to the Board.

Annual Budget

KS noted that 2024 planning documentation was issued for bodies to plan for the same level as last year. KS highlighted that the last payment from the ROI sponsor department was now received.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

It was noted that a 5% estimate was used to account for the anticipated increase in salaries within 2024 however no formal notification on this has been received. KS highlighted that any underspends accounted for within the budget would be reprofiled as we progress through 2024.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board. It was highlighted that the absence figure recorded included a member of Agency staff who has since left post.

7.1 Annual Report (2023)

KS presented the 2023 Annual Report to members for their consideration. It was noted that the visuals this year were a great addition. It was felt that the branding reinforced the identity of the Ulster-Scots Agency and the positive outcomes of its work in that year.

The Board approved the paper for onward progression. KS noted that changes could still be made and welcomed any further input from the Board.

7.2 Accounts (2023)

The 2023 Accounts were presented by KS and noted by the Board.

7.3 Policy Revisions

The Procurement policy was approved by the Board.

8. Marketing Report

IC presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Social Media engagement and reach figure was again up on last reporting period and included 'Word of the Day' likes. 600 new followers.
- Benchmarked report compared to Foras na Gaeilge figures.
- St. Patrick's Day video received over 1000 likes and 37,000 views.

- Balmoral show – members were invited to participate on the Agency stand (15th – 18th May 2024)
- September 2024 – National Ploughing Championships.

9. Education Report

IC presented the Education Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed included the addition of two north/south Twinnings.

10. CEO Report

IC presented the CEO report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- 2024 Business Plan Approval – risk highlighted around approval processes with DfC who have been made aware. Undue delay in funds issuing could result in prioritisation of expenditure in the near future.
- HR Matters – staffing changes discussed. Board updated on recruitment exercises that are underway.
- Accommodation – lease due for renewal February 2025. IC discussed a concept paper and ideas around possible ways forward. IC noted a meeting with DfC is scheduled to take place after Easter and updates would continue to be provided to the Board.
- Ministerial Visit (Feb 2024) – a very positive ministerial visit took place with Board members present. It was highlighted that the Minister was very enthusiastic about our ongoing work to promote opportunities around our links to the USA.
- Monaghan Peace Campus – launch of the campus taking place 10th May. Contact details for the Board have been passed onto the Museum for invite.
- Youth Sector Workshop – sector organisations met with EA and DE to hear more on youth work policy and funding opportunities within youth services. We are establishing a Youth Providers Forum to give Ulster-Scots youth organisations a voice within the area of policy and curriculum.
- US-NI Cultural Linkages – a working group has been established with PRONI and other key organisations to promote our cultural links with the USA, specifically in relation to the forthcoming 250th anniversary.

11. AOB

- Resolution to add to mandate – Board agreed that necessary finance staff should be added to the mandate for the Agency.
- Summer school costs – it was agreed that the school tuition programme should be considered next year in terms of family contribution. In particular, funding allocation by the Agency for meals.
- FD Letter – noted by the Board.
- Boston Tea Party 250 – to follow asap.

12 Date of Next Meeting

Thursday 25th April (11am) in person. It was noted that KS would deputise for the CEO at the next Board meeting.

25th April 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
221st Board Meeting
11am, Hybrid Meeting

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Trevor Wilson
	Karyn Devenney
In Attendance	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services
Apologies:	<i>Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer</i>
Recording Secretary:	Alison Morgan (PA to CEO)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
Freddie Kettle welcomed everyone to the 221st meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 28th March 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.

6. Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024

Karen Stewart presented the 2024 Progress Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Key highlights:

- 1.5 Heritage Projects - planning permission received for Sinclair Seaman's.
- 1.6 V.C Exhibition – launch will be covered by the Ulster Tatler.
- 1.8 Blue Plaque - agreed (via UHC) for installation in Brookebrough on 6th June 2024.
- 1.16 Educational Workshops - *on average*, two workshops are being completed each week by the Educational Officer.
- 1.17 Music/Dance Tuition - programme format reviewed, and partnership agreements issued. Taster Sessions in Cavan are planned to try to onboard more schools.
- 2.3 Music/Dance Tuition - monitoring is being conducted with some groups digitally (whilst still maintaining best practice procedures).
- 2.4 Community Festival Grants – thirty-one applications received (a significant increase on 2022 and 2023 numbers). Eleven groups were proposed for funding. *See item 12 (AOB)*.
- 2.15 Richard Parkes Masterclass – phase one now complete. Positive feedback on the quality of the course and tuition received. Photos on Social media.

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by Karen Stewart, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

Karen Stewart gave update on the finalisation of 2023 Internal Audit. The new Internal Auditing contract is to be awarded week commencing 29 April 2024.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Now sitting with NIAO for final completion.
- 2023 Draft Annual Report and Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Site visit planned for May 2024 and finalisation in October 2024.

Legal Action

Karen Stewart noted that the case management hearing did not take place and no update has yet been received from the representatives. It was noted that the historical fraud case was still with PPS.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board. Drawdown had now been announced by DfC and this was due to be received imminently.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board. It was highlighted that the Staff Officer Accountancy post had now been filled (via recruitment agency).

7.1 Policy Revisions

The following policies were approved by the Board:

- Gifts & Hospitality
- IT Back Up
- Display Screen Equipment
- Internet Usage
- Equipment Loan
- Employee Exit
- Customer Complaints
- Data Breach
- CCTV.

8. Marketing Report

Karen Stewart presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Social Media engagement and reach figure was again up on the last reporting period. Approximately 600 new followers.
- Corporate Website (update) – due to resource shortages we have yet to go out to tender for the new Ulster-Scots Agency website. This will be progressed as soon as resources are available.
- Balmoral show – planning is well underway for May event.

9. Education Report

Karen Stewart presented the Education Report which was noted by the Board.

10. CEO Report

The CEO Report was noted by the Board.

11. AOB

- *Dear Accounting Officer* Letter – noted by the Board.
- Community Festivals Grant Paper – Karen Stewart presented the paper to the Board and discussion took place around planning considerations for 2025. The paper was unanimously approved by the Board.

12. Date of Next Meeting

The recent date change was agreed by the Board for an in-person meeting on Friday 31st May 2024 (2.30pm).

31st May 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
222nd Board Meeting
2.30pm, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Belfast

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
In Attendance	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services
	Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Ann Davison, Ulster-Scots Agency
Apologies:	Karyn Devenney
	Trevor Wilson
Recording Secretary:	Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
Freddie Kettle welcomed everyone to the 222nd meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
Apologies were noted from Trevor Wilson and Karyn Devenney.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 25th April 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.

6. Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024

Ian Crozier presented the Progress report to the Board which was noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

1.3 Support a programme of activity around Ulster-Scots Day – will be progressed now new staff have been appointed.

2.15 Now completed.

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by Karen Stewart, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

Karen Stewart updated on newly appointed Internal Audit contract. Internal Audit commencing June 2024.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Now sitting with NIAO for final completion.
- 2023 Draft Annual Report and Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Site visit planned for May 2024 and finalisation in October 2024.

Legal Action

Karen Stewart advised that no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The following policies were approved by the Board:

- Information Risk Management
- Social Media Policy
- Travel & Subsistence

8. Marketing Report

Ian Crozier presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Social Media engagement and reach figure was again up on the last reporting period.
- Corporate Website (update) – due to resource shortages we have yet to go out to tender for the new Ulster-Scots Agency website. This will be progressed as soon as resources are available.
- Email Marketing (Ezines)

Events including Balmoral Show 15-18 May 2024

Allen McAdam praised the staff team for their efforts at Balmoral.

9. Education Report

Ian Crozier presented the Education Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- 25 Afterschool clubs at end of June including 2 in Co. Donegal.
- 39 workshops completed. 9 of those 39 are now coming off the back of the GB and Girls Guide.
- Girls Guide uptake has been phenomenal – estimated circa 1000 but actual figures circa 3000.
- OCN – external verification was extremely positive.
- Richard Parkes MBE Pipe Majors Masterclass.

10. CEO Report

The CEO Report was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- NSMC Meeting
- HR issues
- Accommodation
- Capital Funding
- Monagan Peace Campus
- Ulster American History Symposium 19th -22nd June
- Cahans Meeting House/Cahans Exodus Anniversary 28th – 29th June

- Massey University, New Zealand

11. AOB

- *Board Away Day* - potentially August

12 Date of Next Meeting

Date TBC as hoping to have a in-person meeting joint language body meeting.

11.00am, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Hybrid

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Trevor Wilson
	Karyn Devenney
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Ann Davison, Ulster-Scots Agency
	Andrew Hamilton, Ulster-Scots Agency
Apologies:	
Recording Secretary:	Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
Freddie Kettle welcomed everyone to the 223rd meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
No Apologies were noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 31st May 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.

6. Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024

Ian Crozier presented the Progress report to the Board which was noted by the Board.

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by Andrew Hamilton which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

New Internal Audit programme for 2024 was agreed at the Audit & Risk Committee 19th June 2024.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Now sitting with NIAO for final completion.
- 2023 Draft Annual Report and Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Site visit planned for May 2024 and finalisation in October 2024.

Legal Action

Andrew Hamilton advised that no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The following policies were approved by the Board:

- Budget Process
- Data Classification
- Disposal Policy
- Visitor Security & Procedures
- Project Management

8. Marketing Report

Ian Crozier presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Word of the Day continues to see significant reach online.
- D Day short film ended up with 89,000 views.
- Blue Plaque - Field Marshal Alan Brooke at Brookeborough.
- Next edition of Paper coming out 6th July.

9. Education Report

Ian Crozier presented the Education Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- 25 Afterschool clubs at end of June including 2 in Co. Donegal.
- 53 Education workshops completed. 12 of those 53 are now coming off the back of the GB and Girls Guide.
- 5 Flagships Schools Awarded this year so far.
- OCN – Lambeg Drumming and had external verification received very positive feedback – from both schools and OCN body.

10. CEO Report

The CEO Report was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- NSMC Meeting approved outstanding Business Plans and Corporate Plans.
- HR issues
- Development Funding
- Belfast City Council Cultural Funding
- Ulster American History Symposium 19th -22nd June
- Maine Ulster-Scots
- D-Day 80
- Armed Forces Day 2024
- Cahans Meeting House/Cahans Exodus Anniversary 28th – 29th June
- Translink – Grand Central Station/Weaver's Cross
- Belfast Works Project
- Accommodation

Karyn Devenney left the meeting.

11. AOB

Ian Crozier presented the papers which were noted by the Board.

- 11.0 FD (DoF) 07 24 – Public Sector Pay and Remit approvals 2024-2025
- 11.1 FD (DoF) 06 24 – Laying of Annual Report and Accounts

12 **Date of Next Meeting**

Date of next meeting 22nd August 2024 @11am in Belfast.

29th August 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
224th Board Meeting
11.00am, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Hybrid

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Trevor Wilson
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Ann Davison, Ulster-Scots Agency
	William Olphert, Director of Education & Language
Apologies:	Karyn Devenney
Recording Secretary:	Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
Freddie Kettle welcomed everyone to the 224th meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
No Apologies were noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 27th June 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.
6. **Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024**
Ian Crozier presented the Progress report to the Board which was noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

1.19 Kelvin project and physics competition

3.2 Border Reivers Trail

3.3 USA Outreach and Where Eagles Fly Stage show

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by Ian Crozier which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

2024 Internal audit programme has now begun with safeguarding, payroll & HR audits underway.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. All audit queries addressed, now with auditors.
- 2023 Draft Annual Report and Accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024. Site visit planned for May 2024 and finalisation in October 2024.

Legal Action

Ian Crozier advised that there was no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The following policies were approved by the Board:

- Flexi & Toil Policy

8. Marketing Report

Ian Crozier presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Benchmarking on social media, particularly Facebook. Word of the day is encouraging engagement.
- Website procurement is underway.

9. Education Report

William Olphert presented the Education Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- Metrics for measuring on educational outcomes

10. CEO Report

The CEO Report was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- NSMC Meeting approved outstanding Business Plans and Corporate Plans.
- HR issues
- Accommodation
- Development Funding
- Belfast City Council Cultural Funding
- Edengate Travel
- Translink – Grand Central Station/Weaver's Cross

11. Mid Armagh Community Network

Ian Crozier spoke to the paper recommending funding of £31,897.50 for Mid Armagh Community Network. The recommendation was unanimously accepted by the Board.

12. AOB

Trevor Wilson raised the ongoing process for the development of an Ulster-Scots strategy and asked whether this would be brought to the Agency board for discussion. Ian Crozier agreed to speak to Derek Reaney to follow up.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting 19th September 2024 at 11.00am in Belfast.

**19th September 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
225th Board Meeting**

11.00pm, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Hybrid

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Karyn Devenney
	Trevor Wilson
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services
	William Olphert, Director of Education & Language
Apologies:	David Gilliland, Director of Development
Recording Secretary:	Ann Davison (P.A to Chief Executive Officer)

- Welcome from the Chairperson**
Freddie Kettle welcomed everyone to the 225th meeting of the Board.
- Apologies**
No apologies were noted.
- Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
- Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 29th August 2024 were approved.
- Matters Arising**
None noted.
- Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024**
Ian Crozier presented the Progress Report which was noted by the Board.
- Finance Paper**

The report was presented by Karen Stewart and discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

- 2024 audits ongoing in Safeguarding and in Payroll/HR.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 A further query with U-SA to be addressed.
- 2023 accounts submitted to Sponsor Departments 31 March 2024.
Audit to resume after summer local authority audits.

Legal Action

Karen Stewart advised that there was no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The Travel and Subsistence Policy - updated rates were proposed and approved by the Board.

8. Marketing Report

Ian Crozier presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Success of Belfast International Tattoo 2024 and increased visibility
- Spinning Yarns Festival discussed with suggestions for next year
- Ebrington Tattoo – Ian has raised with sponsor departments
- Leid Week – more involvement with North/West of Ulster discussed

Karyn Devenney left the meeting at 12.40pm.

9. Education Report

William Olphert presented the Education Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- North/West event will take place during Leid Week
- When o' Wurds III quiz has progressed. Music, QR Code and automatic certificate will generate on a mobile version.
- Development of new initiatives

10. CEO Report

The CEO Report was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- Staff member assaulted at Open Botanic Event, reported to PSNI
- Funding obtained from BCC for 5 events in the Belfast area.
- Ulster University visit

11. Equality Scheme Review

Board reviewed and approved the Equality Scheme subject to any further changes proposed from the Chief Executive. Any substantive changes would be referred back to the Board.

12. AOB

Ian informed the board that Centre for Cross Border Studies was seeking board member participation in a research project into 25 years of cross-border cooperation. Allen McAdam agreed to be included.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting Thursday 28th November at 11.00 am.

**29th October 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
226th Board Meeting
11.00pm, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Hybrid**

Present:	Freddie Kettle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Karyn Devenney
	Trevor Wilson
In Attendance	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services
	William Olphert, Director of Education & Language
	David Gilliland, Director of Development
Apologies:	Ian Crozier, CEO
Recording Secretary:	Ann Davison (P.A to Chief Executive Officer)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
Freddie Kettle welcomed everyone to the 226th meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
Apologies from Ian Crozier, CEO were noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 29th October 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.
6. **Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024**
David Gilliland presented the Progress Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights discussed:

- Plan for Leid Week, nine councils in Northern Ireland will host events
- FRLSU Conference, 16-18 papers being presented in two venues on 29th and 30th November. Reception and Book Launch to be held at USCN on Friday 29th November
- Tartan Day Dander – Walk from USCN to City Hall, Chieftan will be Belfast's Lord Lieutenant or Lord Mayor. Tunnocks will sponsor by providing teacakes

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by Karen Stewart and discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

- The report was noted by the Board.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 and 2023 accounts could be signed off at the same time

Legal Action

Karen Stewart advised that there was no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was discussed and noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The report was noted by the Board.

8. Marketing Report

David Gilliland presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- Continued growth over all social media channels

- Ulster-Scot supplement will be published the week before Leid Week
- More visibility of the board to be included in the Ulster-Scot supplement going forward

9. Education Report

William Olphert presented the Education Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- When o' Wurd's Ill quiz has had 47 informants with an average score of 11.5
- There will be 20 words daily over November to coincide with Leid Week
- Meeting with Jay Basra from QUB Young Unionists, will be visibility at QUB during Leid Week
- John Hewitt Centre at Bellaghy Bawn to include Ulster-Scots

10. CEO Report

Karen Stewart presented the CEO Report which was noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- Board Vacancies to be addressed 2025
- Papers for next sectorial meeting submitted
- Accommodation - Links to 16 properties sent to consider
- Royal College of Defence Studies visited USCN

11. Draft 2025 Business Plan

Board reviewed and approved the Draft Business Plan 2025

12. AOB

- Reduction of number of Board Meetings from 10 to 8 discussed. Will be put to the new board in December

14. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting Thursday 21st November at 11.00am.

**21st November 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
227th Board Meeting
2.00pm, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Hybrid**

Present:	Freddie Kettyle (Acting Chair)
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	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Karyn Devenney
	Trevor Wilson
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, CEO
	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services
	David Gilliland, Director of Development
Apologies:	None
Recording Secretary:	Ann Davison (P.A to Chief Executive Officer)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
The Acting Chairman Freddie Kettyle welcomed everyone to the 227th meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
No apologies were noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 29th October 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.
6. **Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024**
The report was presented by Ian Crozier which was discussed and noted by the Board.
Highlights discussed:
 - Radio Advertising underway for Leid Week, one to arrange for Burn's Night
 - Heritage project with Linen Hall Library and Union Theological College

- Kelvin 200 – Launches on Tuesday 2nd December 2004 at The Royal Belfast Academical Institution's science laboratory
- Meeting of BIC IML workstream officials planned for Monday 25th November 2024 at the agency

7. Finance Paper

The report was presented by Karen Stewart which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

- The report was noted by the Board.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 and 2023 accounts have now been forwarded to Foras for signing.

Legal Action

Karen Stewart advised that there was no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The report was noted by the Board.

7.2 File approval for disposal

File approvals for routine disposal presented to the Board in accordance with policy.

The Board **approved** disposal of files.

8. Marketing Report

David Gilliland presented the Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- 1,500 recipients of marketing emails
- Third Ulster-Scot supplement of 2024 being published on 23/11/2024 including the programme for Leid Week

9. Education Report

Ian Crozier presented the Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

10. CEO Report

Ian Crozier presented the Report which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- NSMC Language Sectorial - meeting in December has now been postponed to 2025
- Capital Funding - Ian Crozier will meet with two officials to discuss how this will take form
- North-South Funding Ratio
- HR Matters – Ian Crozier requested Agency Employees to leave the meeting to discuss matters further in his report to the Board
- Agency Employees returned following HR update provided to the Board.

11. Grants for Consideration

Karen Stewart presented to the Board the following grants for approval;

- fUSEM Mournie
- Community Impact Programme:
 - Small Steps
 - Schomberg Society
 - Derry & Raphoe Action

The Board **approved** all four grants at the recommended levels.

12. Potential Board Meeting Dates

Karen Stewart presented to the Board Potential Board Meeting Dates which were **approved** by the Board.

13. AOB

14. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting

Joint Language Meeting (online) 11th December at 4.00pm

Thursday 19th December at 2.00pm.

19th December 2024
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
228th Board Meeting
11.00am, Ulster-Scots Agency Offices, Hybrid

Present:	Freddie Kettyle (Acting Chair)
	Lavinia Tilson
	Allen McAdam
	Karyn Devenney
	Trevor Wilson
In Attendance	Ian Crozier, CEO
	Karen Stewart, Director of Corporate Services
	David Gilliland, Director of Development
	William Olphert, Director of Education and Language
Apologies:	None
Recording Secretary:	Ann Davison (P.A to Chief Executive Officer)

1. **Welcome from the Chairperson**
The Acting Chairman Freddie Kettyle welcomed everyone to the 228th meeting of the Board.
2. **Apologies**
No apologies were noted.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
No declarations of interest were noted.
4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**
Minutes from previous meeting held on 21st November 2024 were approved.
5. **Matters Arising**
None noted.

6. Progress Report Against Business Plan 2024

The Progress Report was presented by Ian Crozier, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- Total of 47 targets on Business 2024 Business Plan
 - o 38 were met
 - o 7 partially met
 - o 2 not met due to staffing or budgeting issues

7. Finance Paper

The Finance Paper was presented by Karen Stewart, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Internal Audit

- The report was noted by the Board.

Annual Accounts

- 2022 accounts due to be signed off by NSLB tomorrow (20/12/24)
- 2023 accounts due to be signed off over the next few weeks

Legal Action

Karen Stewart advised that there was no further update.

Performance Actual -vs- Budget

The reported spends against 2024 budget figures were noted by the Board.

Prompt Payments

The report was noted by the Board.

Statutory Obligations Report

The report was noted by the Board.

Gifts & Hospitality

The report was noted by the Board.

Attendance Report

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1 Policy Revisions

The report was noted by the Board.

7.1.1 Performance Management Policy

The Policy was presented to and approved by the Board.

8. Marketing Report

David Gilliland presented the Marketing Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- e-zine distributed w/c 18.11.24, focus was on Leid Week
- The current mailing list has over 1,500 recipients
- Agency's staff require training to take control of website
- Positive feedback from Tartan Day. Belfast City Council to be approached to increase the numbers to 1,000 for next event
- Look into dietary requirements for next Tartan Day

9. Education Report

William Olphert presented the Education Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights;

- 97 workshops completed
- Gary Blair will return to post in January 2025
- During 2025 will commence tracking impact to determine targets that are working
- Taakin thegether was not confirmed before Leid Week, plans to pivot to shared education site
- Resource for Boys' Brigade Ulster-scots badgework completed and launched
- Ulster-Scots Highway to be researched, birth to death
- FRLSU conference attended, new learners are keeping language alive

10. CEO Report

Ian Crozier presented the Report, which was discussed and noted by the Board.

Highlights:

- NSMC Language Sectorial - meeting in December has now been postponed to 2025
- Board Vacancies not filled, Board agreed to recruit in New Year
- Lorna Elliott, Office and HR Manager is leaving, Lorna has provisionally offered to stay on to help with HR matters
- Business Case for agency's accommodation will be finalized by the end of week
- Tartan Day was collectively viewed by over 270,000 alongside two articles in the Belfast Newsletter within seven days
- CEO and Director of Development appeared before the TEO, the committee session was reported by BBC Northern Ireland

- Kelvin prize has been launched, pocket sized cards with be distributed to schools to promote

11. Grants for Consideration

Karen Stewart presented to the Board the following grant for approval.

- Not so serious Burns – Bready & District Ulster-Scots Development Association.

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The Board **approved** the proposed grant.

12. AOB

Karen Stewart Board Members to forward on all Travel and Subsistence expenses along with travel insurance documents by the end of the year.

14. Date of Next Meeting

Date of next meeting

Thursday 20th February at 11.00am.