Board Decisions 2020
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The progress report was presented by Mr Crozier and discussed. The Board noted the contents of the report.

7. Finance Report

Finance Paper

The report was presented by Mr McCallum and noted by the Board.

Mr McCallum also advised that the latest updated indicated 2017 Accounts should be laid by April 2020. It is also hoped that the 2018 accounts may also be laid at the same time as the 2017 as they are currently with Foras for translation.
**Budget Vs Actual Outturn 2019**

Mr McCallum explained the budget variances. Mr McCallum confirmed that the underspend in Servicing the Community was due to groups not claiming the full amount of their award due to changed circumstances, such as lower actual costs or securing additional funding elsewhere. In response to a questions from the Board, Mr McCallum confirmed that the underspend was not due to the Agency withholding funds in respect of claims.

Mr McCallum explained that the Education underspend was due to an ongoing project with CCEA.

The Board discussed the potential to have paperless board meetings and asked Mr McCallum to investigate the feasibility of this.

**Action: Mr McCallum**

**Statutory Obligations Report**

The report was noted by the Board.

**Prompt Payments**

The report was noted by the Board.

**HR Report**

The report was noted by the Board.

**Audit and Risk Committee**

Ms Andrews, Chair of the ARC, reported on the annual report and satisfactory rating which had been received in respect of the work of the committee. The Board noted the report and congratulated all those involved for their ongoing work in this area.
8. **New Decade New Approach**

Mr Crozier spoke to the report, which was discussed by the Board. The Board was content with the Chief Executive’s proposed approach, which was to seek clarity around the situation where possible and work with a range of stakeholders to promote the interests of Ulster-Scots within the developing situation.

9. **Risk Register**

Mr McCallum presented the report, which was noted by the Board.

Mr Crozier and Mr McCallum reported on a recent discussion with Sponsor Departments in relation to Brexit related risks on the Register. After a discussion, the Board agreed that it was content for the Brexit risks to be removed from the Register, subject to consultation with the ARC.

10. **CEO Report**

Mr Crozier presented the paper to the Board.

Mr Crozier advised that it is currently anticipated that the full Board will be in place no later than April 2020, but this is subject to ongoing discussions for form a new Irish government.

Mr Crozier updated the Board on developments in respect of the Presidential Cottages project with Mid and East Antrim Council. The Agency has been forced to surrender £50k in respect of the Arthur Cottage, Cullybackey, due to uncertainty created by the decision of the Council to enter into discussions with a private sector operator over the future ownership/management of the facility. Once the situation has been resolved to our satisfaction we will seek to re-establish the project for Cullybackey. In the meantime, work is progressing in respect of the element of the project in connection with the Andrew Jackson Cottage, Boneybefore, Carrickfergus, which is worth a further £50k.

Mr Crozier advised that the Agency had also received £30,000 in capital for IT which meant a full IT upgrade in terms of PCs, servers and software.
Mr Gamble commented on the success of Language Week, including the events programme and the range of materials that had been produced to support it, including the online Wheen o Wurds Quiz. In response to a question, Ms McMaster confirmed that the promotional pens were now on re-order due to their popularity. Mr Hanna confirmed that the number of people taking the test had now passed 32,000.

Mr Crozier reported on the recent Burns Week activities, which included a range of community showcase activities, as well as higher profile events like the Big Burns Day in Belfast City Hall, which involved the Lord Mayor, High Sheriff and DfC Minister. He advised that the executive proposes to review both Language Week and Burns Week in the first half of 2020 to start preparation for 2021.

11. Business Plan 2020

The Board discussed and agreed the draft Business Plan for 2020.

Mr Crozier reported that the draft Corporate Plan was currently being finalised.

12. AOB

Mr McCallum tabled a brief paper identifying a request for funding which had been received from Bready and District Ulster-Scots Development Association in respect of the forthcoming European Highland Dance Championships in Londonderry. It was proposed that a full paper would be issued in due course, but would have to come to the Board in light of current board numbers, as the Grants Committee was not currently operating.
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch
180th Board Meeting
12th March 2020
Ulster-Scots Agency

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present:</th>
<th>Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)</th>
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<td>Ms. Julie Andrews</td>
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<td>Mr. David McNarry</td>
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<td>Mr. Iain Carlisle</td>
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<td>In Attendance:</td>
<td>Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive</td>
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<td>Mr. Richard Hanna, Director of Education &amp; Language</td>
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<td>Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services</td>
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<td>Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development</td>
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<td>Apologies:</td>
<td>N/A</td>
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<td>Recording Secretary:</td>
<td>Ms. Rachel Shannon (PA to CEO)</td>
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5. **Matters Arising**

All matters arising were dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

6. **Progress Report Against Draft Business Plan**

The Board noted the contents of the report.

7. **Finance Report**

*Finance Paper*

The report was presented by Mr. McCallum and noted by the Board.
Mr. McCallum explained that we are 17k overbudgeted at this time and advised that the Letter of Offer for the new IT refresh has been received and will be processed in due course.

Mr. McCallum has advised there were issues surrounding the Coronavirus where schools are being closed along with the cancelling of tuitions. It was outlined that if the office has to close due to the situation then at least 4 members of staff will immediately be able to work at home using the disaster recovery model. Further discussions are to be had as the situation evolves.

**Budget Vs Actual Outturn 2019**
Mr. McCallum presented the report to the Board and it was noted by the Board.

**Statutory Obligations Report**
The report was noted by the Board.

**Prompt Payments**
The report was noted by the Board.

**Gifts and Hospitality**
The report was noted by the Board.

**HR Report**
The report was noted by the Board.

**Review of Corporate Plan 2019 Draft**
Mr. McCallum advised the report was a roundup of last years Corporate/Business plan. The Board noted the contents of the report subject to a few minor amendments.

8. **Education Report**
Mr. Hanna reported to the Board of his recent trip to Savannah, Atlanta and Georgia, USA. The purpose of the visit was to launch the Ulster-Scots Agency video ‘From Ulster to Savannah’ which was a record of the appearance in the St Patrick’s Day Parade in Savannah Georgia of the Omagh Protestant Boys Melody Flute Band in 2019.

Curated screenings took place in Savannah and Atlanta. The Events were organised in partnership with the British and Irish Consuls General in Atlanta, Georgia Southern University (Savannah) and The Northern Ireland Bureau.

The Savannah event was opened by the Mayor of Savannah and guests at both events included representatives of the St Patrick’s Day Committee and St Andrew’s and Burns Societies. Approximately 100 guests attended each of the events.

Each event featured a display of the 10 panel exhibition about Ulster-Scots in Savannah. This exhibition was produced for the band’s visit in 2019 and features Ulster-Scots links with Georgia. It has remained with Georgia Southern University and continues to be used at Ulster-Scots events in Georgia.

A date has been secured for a launch of ‘From Ulster to Savannah’ in Belfast in Parliament Buildings (12th March).

The Board noted the contents of the report.


Ms. McMaster presented the report and advised that it was made up of a summary of meetings that had recently taken place

Ms. McMaster advised that NI Human Rights Comission would like a formal indication from the Agency as to our support of the agreement to designate Ulster-Scots under the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities. It was agreed that the Agency would continue to liaise with NIHRC and bring some more detailed advice to the Board.

10. CEO Report
Mr. Crozier presented the paper to the Board.

The Board noted the contents of the report and agreed to establish a working group to consider proposals to mark the Centenary of Northern Ireland in 2021. Mr Gamble, Mr Carlisle, Ms Andrews and Mr McNarry volunteered to participate in the group and also suggested that Allen McAdam be approached.

**Action: Mr Crozier**

11. **Grants for Consideration**

The Board approved the recommendations for support for the European Highland Dance Championships and FUSEfm Mourne, however it was noted that these may be impacted by the emerging COVID-19 situation.

12. **Policy Revisions**

No changes were noted by the Board.

13. **AOB**

No AOB noted.

14. **Date of Next Board Meeting**

Board members were reminded that the next meeting will take place at 1.00pm on 23rd April 2020 at the Corn Exchange.

Signed:........................................................................................................

Dated:........................................................................................................
Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
181st Board Meeting  
23rd April 2020  
Ulster-Scots Agency

Present:  
Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)  
Ms. Julie Andrews  
Mr. Iain Carlisle  
Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive

In Attendance:  
Mr. Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language  
Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services  
Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development

Apologies:  
Mr. David McNarry

Recording Secretary:  
Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

5. Matters Arising

All matters arising were dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

6. COVID-19 Update

Mr Crozier presented a detailed report to the Board which set out the impact of COVID-19 on various parts of the Agency’s work. During the discussion that followed, several members expressed the view that the Agency was performing well in difficult circumstances.

Members discussed in particular the situation in respect of virtual tuition and asked the executive to ensure that monitoring was taking place in order to ensure that the provision was value for money for both the Agency and participants.
The report was noted by the Board.

7. **Progress Report**

The Report was presented to the Board by Mr Crozier and noted by the Board.

8. **Finance and Corporate Services**

*Finance Paper*

The report was presented by Mr McCallum and noted by the Board.

Mr McCallum advised that the 2020 Audit Schedule has been agreed. Mr McCallum also advise that the 2017 Accounts are to be laid 24th April 2020 and 2018 should be laid in the next few weeks.

Mr McCallum advised that the 2019 Internal Audit was underway electronically.

*Budget Vs Actual Outturn 2019*

Mr McCallum explained the budget variances and had hoped to be able to have a better picture upon April’s Month End.

The Board discussed the risk of underspend as a result of the current situation and agreed that once the impact of Covid-19 had been addressed, any available resources should be directed towards preparation for the Centenary of Northern Ireland, as it may be difficult to secure additional resources going forward.

*Statutory Obligations Report*

The report was noted by the Board.

*Prompt Payments*

The report was noted by the Board.

*HR Report*
The report was noted by the Board.

*Risk Register*

The report was noted by the Board.

9. **CEO Report**

The Board noted the CEO Report as presented by Mr Crozier.

Mr Crozier advised that the Agency was still working on the Agency’s accommodations issues but progress was slow due to current COVID-19 situation.

10. **AOB**

Nothing to report.

11. **Date of Next Board Meeting**

Board members were reminded that the next meeting will take place at 1.00pm on 28th May 2020 and via Zoom.

Signed: ...........................................................................................................

Dated: ..........................................................