



# **Board Decisions 2021**

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**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
188<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> January 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.00PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms. Julie Andrews
	Mr. Iain Carlisle
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive
	Mr. Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr. David McNarry
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 were noted and approved by the Board.

**5. Matters Arising**

Any matters arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

The progress presented the Year End position and it was noted that by the Board that what is written in the Annual Report would be important, to fully explain the progress report and why some targets have not been met.

Mr Crozier advised that as the Annual Report cannot be published until accounts are finalised in both jurisdictions that the Agency may want to create a summary document for issue in a more timely way.

## **7. Finance Paper**

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

### ***Internal Audit***

The following audits were carried out during 2020:

- Finance
- IT Security, Business Continuity Plan & Disaster Recovery
- GDPR
- Complaints, Gifts & Hospitality
- Drawdown Procedure
- Safeguarding
- Grants Management and Government Funding Database

All of the internal audits undertaken achieved **satisfactory** assurance ratings and the recommendations are in the process of being implemented. The follow-up audit took place in early December, but the Annual Assurance Statement has not yet been received.

### ***Annual Accounts***

**2018** – The Accounts were certified 23rd December 2019. The Agency's accounts and annual report are now in the process for laying, DFC advised 10<sup>th</sup> December 2020 that they hoped to have them laid in both jurisdictions in the next couple of weeks – to date this has not happened.

**2019** – Draft accounts for 2019 were submitted to Sponsor Departments on 24<sup>th</sup> March 2020. The 2019 audit commenced w/c 30th March 2020. The audit timescale was impacted by a move to remote working and the substitution of lead auditors due to illness. The substantive testing took place 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and NIAO have advised the Agency that they will not be certified until early 2021.

### ***Annual Budget***

The Agency carried out the necessary re-profiling of the Budget in the last quarter of 2020 and there had been variances due to Covid-19 pandemic. Underspends were reallocated to fund other projects.

We have also been able to fund projects and interventions that we would not have been able to under normal operating conditions. The reallocations have included a

number of partnership agreements which enables us to effectively increase the amount of money being spent on Ulster-Scots projects. These partners include the Gamble Library, Monaghan County Museum and the Linenhall Library.

The Board noted the Year End position.

Mr Gamble congratulated the Agency and its staff for Year End position and hoped it would be reflected positively moving forward.

### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***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.

### ***Annual Audit Report***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***Audit Recommendations***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***Risk Registers***

The report was noted by the Board

### ***Policy Revisions***

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board:

- Disciplinary & Grievance Procedure
- IT Security Policy

- Shared Parental Leave
- FOI
- Business Case Policy
- GDPR Policy

### ***Disposal Schedule***

The board approved the disposal request presented to the Board.

## **8. Corporate Plan 2020-2022 and 2021 Business Plan**

Mr Crozier presented the Corporate Plan 2020-2022 to the Board for noting. This had previously been approved by the Board but was being tabled again as it was about to go to NSMC for approval. The Board confirmed its approval for the plan.

Mr Crozier presented the draft 2021 Business Plan for approval. After discussion this was approved by the Board.

### **Priorities for Potential 2021 Budget Increase**

Further to ongoing discussion with Sponsor Departments in relation to the budget for 2021, Mr Crozier presented proposals in relation to how potential budget uplift scenarios of 10% and 20% could be utilised. After discussion, the Board endorsed the proposals.

## **9. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier presented the CEO report which was noted by the Board.

Mr Crozier advised that The Agency had been awarded an additional £430,000 in relation to the Covid-19 resilience fund to support the pressure of £130k over-subscription on the first Small Grants call and £300k to support a second Small Grants call. In respect of the second call, the Agency will process the grants but the Department will pay due to DoF restrictions on additional cash being issued to the Agency without an approved Business Plan and Budget in place. The Agency will make contact with the Department to confirm how these payments will be made.

Mr Gamble asked whether there was a risk that Sponsor Departments would ask how the Agency had been able to carry this significant additional piece of work without deducting anything from the allocation to cover administration. Mr Crozier explained that this had been managed through a combination of using underspent resources from vacant posts to cover the cost of an agency worker; utilising unused travel time from development staff; and running up high levels of flexi/toil across a range of staff, which everyone involved had been content to do given that it was maximising the resources being made available to the Ulster-Scots community. Within Agency policies, the Agency would allow staff to use their toil/flexi instead of annual leave and

then carry over their annual leave under the Covid-19 leave arrangements, which allow it to be taken over a period of several years, at times which suit business need. Mr Crozier emphasized that it was only due to the very exceptional circumstances of Covid-19 that had enabled the Agency to deliver such a large piece of work within existing resources.

**Captial Resources**

Ms McMaster spoke on the UTC Gamble Library project, which had allowed for the preservation of 60 key texts and a range of improvements to storage conditions at the library. Ms McMaster confirmed a report would follow, then a site visit when guidelines permit.

The report was noted by the Board.

**10. AOB**

The Board agreed to receive the Draft Disability Plan for comment prior to going out for consultation.

**12. Date of Next Board Meeting**

Next two meetings agreed as follows:

24<sup>th</sup> February 2021, 6.00pm via Zoom

24<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 6.00pm via Zoom

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
189<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
24<sup>th</sup> February 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.00PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms. Julie Andrews
	Mr. Iain Carlisle
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive
	Mr. Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr. David McNarry
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms. Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 27<sup>th</sup> January 2021 were noted and approved by the Board.

**5. Matters Arising**

Any matters arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

**6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

Mr Hanna confirmed that the Discover Ulster-Scots website would still be going live in the first Quarter of 2021. Mr Carlisle offered assistance with further website content on Bands should it be required.



Mr McCallum advised that the newspaper tender would be going live soon and the tender is for the printing of four papers this year. There will be still be the same amount of content produced but split over four papers rather than six as previously.

## **7. Finance Paper**

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

### ***Internal Audit***

The preliminary Schedule of Audits which have been agreed for 2021 will be issued to the Audit & Risk Committee which will include:

- Payroll
- Governance
- Outreach and Education
- HR
- Grants

### ***Annual Accounts***

**2018** – The Accounts were certified 23rd December 2019. The Agency's accounts and annual report are now in the process for laying, DFC advised 17<sup>th</sup> February 2021 that they will be laid in both jurisdictions 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**2019** - The 2019 audit commenced the week beginning 30th March 2020 and the draft accounts submitted to the departments 24th March 2020. The audit is continuing remotely and the lead auditor has changed due to illness. The substantive testing took place 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020 and NIAO informed the Agency that they will not be certified until early 2021. We have received the RTCWG and it has been responded to and returned. There are no recommendations on the report.

**2020** – Work is underway on the 2020 accounts and aiming for the 31<sup>st</sup> March deadline to submit to the Departments.

### ***Annual Budget***

The 2020 budget to date has not been agreed by NSMC, we expect this to take place 31st March 2021. At this time we are working to the 2016 figure and over committing the budget to allow room for the unpredictability of the current pandemic situation.

### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

**Statutory Obligations Report**

It was noted that the Agency received two Freedom of Information requests and both have responses have been issued. The Board noted the report.

**Prompt Payments**

The report was noted by the Board.

**HR Report**

The report was noted by the Board.

**7.1 Corefunded Reports 2020 – Monreagh**

Reports were noted by the Board.

**7.2 Corefunded Reports 2020 – USCN**

Reports were noted by the Board.

**8. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier presented the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

Board members reflected on the very positive outcome of the Covid-19 funding initiative and passed on congratulations to the staff team.

**9. AOB**

Board members were asked to revert as soon as possible with any comments on the Disability Action Plan.

**10. Date of Next Board Meeting**

Next four meetings agreed as follows:

Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
190<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
24<sup>th</sup> March 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.00PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms. Julie Andrews
	Mr. Iain Carlisle
	Mr. David McNarry
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive
	Mr. Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	N/A
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms. Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> February 2021 were noted and approved by the Board.

## **5. Matters Arising**

Any matters arising were covered elsewhere on the agenda.

## **6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

Mr Crozier explained that some targets had not yet commenced and this was due to staff attentions being redirected to administering the Covid-19 Resilience Funding at present but assured the Board that the Educational targets would be resumed later in the year. One target had already been completed relating to the delivery of promotional programme in relation to the Census.

Mr McCallum provided confirmation that the tender for printing the newspaper was currently out to tender and would close over the next week. The main issue was a distribution problem and it was agreed that digital articles would be promoted where possible in conjunction with the paper.

## **7. Finance Paper**

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

### ***Internal Audit***

The preliminary Schedule of Audits which have been agreed for 2021 with Payroll, HR and Fixed Assets scheduled for end of April and beginning of May.

### ***Annual Accounts***

**2018** – The Accounts were laid in both jurisdictions 1<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

**2019** - The Agency accounts are complete along with the Annual Report and are with Foras for consolidation and translation. Once this process is complete we can move to signing the accounts.

**2020** – Work is underway on the 2020 accounts and aiming for the 31<sup>st</sup> March deadline to submit to the Departments. The Accounts will be forwarded to the Board as soon as they are complete.

### ***Annual Budget***

The 2020 budget to date has not been agreed by NSMC, we expect this to take place 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021. At this time we are working to the 2016 figure and over committing the budget to allow room for the unpredictability of the current pandemic situation.

### ***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

Full nominal review to be carried out at the end of Quarter One (31/01/2021) and then re-profiling or reallocating can commence if required.

### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***Statutory Obligations Report***

The Board noted the report.

### ***Prompt Payments***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***HR Report***

The report was noted by the Board.

## **7.1 Policy Update**

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board:

- Fixed Asset Policy & Procedures
- Display Screen Equipment (DSE)
- Email Usage Policy
- Advanced Payment Season Ticket Policy
- Dignity at Work Policy
- Equipment Loan Policy

## **7.2 Business Case Policy**

The Board approved the new Business Case Policy to include new Business Case Module.

## **7.3 Social Media Report**

Mr McCallum presented report to the Board. The report was noted by the Board and request was made that such a detailed Social Media Report should be presented on a quarterly basis.

## **8. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier presented the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

Board members reflected on the very positive outcome of the Covid-19 funding initiative and passed on congratulations to the staff team.

**9. Census**

Ms McMaster presented a Census report to the Board. The Agency ran a successful promotional campaign, including social media, radio and print advertising in 17 local newspapers.

Ms Andrews commented on the visibility of the campaign, which she had seen on a range of mediums.

**10. AOB**

There was no other business.

**11. Date of Next Board Meeting**

Next three meetings agreed as follows:

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
191<sup>st</sup> Board Meeting  
29<sup>th</sup> April 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.30PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms. Julie Andrews
	Mr. David McNarry
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive
	Mr. Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr. Iain Carlisle
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms. Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting of 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021 were noted and approved by the Board.

**5. Matters Arising**

Mr Crozier advised that the scheduled NSMC meeting which was due to consider board appointments and outstanding Corporate and Business Plans had been cancelled and a subsequently rescheduled meeting had also not taken place due to issues with ministerial availability. It was hoped that the papers would be taken at a Transport sectoral planned for 30<sup>th</sup> April and an update was awaited.

## **6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

## **7. Finance Paper**

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

### ***Internal Audit***

Fixed Asset almost completed with one potential recommendation regarding additional signatures on the fixed asset register. Payroll audit due to commence next month.

### ***Annual Accounts***

**2019** – Accounts signed of 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 and now awaiting a laying date.

**2020** – Work is underway on the 2020 accounts and issued to Board 26<sup>th</sup> March 2021 and submitted to the Departments by specified timetables.

### ***Annual Budget***

The 2020 budget to date has not been agreed by NSMC, we expect this to take place 31st March 2021. At this time we are working to the 2016 figure and over committing the budget to allow room for the unpredictability of the current pandemic situation.

### ***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

Biggest variance is 'Working with Others' and is due to the late drawdown of core funding from USCN. Education's variance is due to slow return of grant claims.

### ***Fraud Report***

Mr McCallum updated the Board in relation to an ongoing potential fraud issue.

### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.



### ***Statutory Obligations Report***

The Board noted the report showing one Freedom of Information request and response issued within statutory time frames.

The potential Fraud Issue has been raised on the report.

### ***Prompt Payments***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***HR Report***

The report was noted by the Board.

## **7.1 Policy Update**

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board to include:

- Bank Procedures
- Income, debtors & Petty Cash

## **7.2 Risk Register**

The Board noted the report.

## **7.3 Marketing Report**

Mr McCallum presented the report to the Board.

Mr McCallum confirmed that the newspaper tender was unsuccessful even after a week's extension on the return deadline date. Mr McCallum undertook to explore the matter further and report back to a future meeting.

**8. AOB**

Mr Crozier alerted the Board to the possibility of some adverse press coverage following recent media enquiries.

Mr Crozier advised the Board that our Sponsor Branch in DfC had recently raised the possibility that a recent court case involving the Charity Commission for Northern Ireland may have implications for the operation of the Agency. The Department is awaiting legal advice from DSO and will revert to us in due course.

Mr McCallum advised that the Grants Officer vacancy was open for applications, closing on 28<sup>th</sup> May and that the Music and Dance Tuition funding round is now open.

**9. Date of Next Board Meeting**

Next two meetings agreed as follows:

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> May 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**192nd Board Meeting**  
**11<sup>th</sup> May 2021**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms. Julie Andrews
	Mr. David McNarry
	Mr. Allen McAdam
	Mr. Freddie Kettyle
	Mr. Iain Carlisle
	Mrs. Lavinia Tilson
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr. Ian Crozier, Chief Executive
	Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Ms. Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Ms. Karyn Devenney

The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and expressed his hope that the Board would soon be able to meet in person to formally welcome newly appointed members.

The Chief Executive outlined the background to the Freedom of Information request which had resulted in the calling of a special meeting of the Board. He confirmed that the Agency generally operated on the principle of disclosure however in this instance officials had taken the view that an exemption may be engaged and a decision was required from the Board with regards how to proceed.

He apologised for the short timeframe for consideration but explained that it was only as officials reviewed the legislation more fully that they became aware that the decision making role for such matters rested with the Board and not the Chief Executive.

Members' attention was drawn to the list of material which officials had identified for consideration.

In light of the Agency’s plans to engage with the Ulster-Scots community both formally and informally the Board was invited to consider whether an exemption was engaged under section 36(2)(b)(ii).

The Chief Executive then explained the concerns officials had with regards to sharing information with third party organisations outside of the sector ahead of concluding a consultation exercise with the wider Ulster-Scots community. Reference was made to the difficult conversations which had already been had amongst the Board on this matter and the need to have similarly frank discussions within the community in order to reach a broad consensus.

The Chair confirmed that the proposed approach would be the same regardless of who was requesting the information and that the refusal to disclose in this instance was to ensure that no third party unduly influenced ongoing consultation and subsequent policy development. The Chief Executive reiterated that there would be opportunities for third party organisations such as the applicant to discuss these matters with the Agency once consultation with the Ulster-Scots community was complete.

There was a consensus amongst members that in this instance it was reasonable to engage the exemption outlined in Section 36(2)(b)(ii) and (c) in order to ensure that the community had the freedom to shape the policy which could have a bearing on the protections they could expect as a result of designation as a national minority within the UK.

The Chair agreed to circulate a minute to Members for agreement ahead of the formal response issuing to Mr Holder.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
193<sup>rd</sup> Board Meeting  
27<sup>th</sup> May 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.00PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms. Julie Andrews
	Mr. David McNarry
	Mr Freddie Kettyle
	Mr Allen McAdam
	Ms Lavinia Tilson
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr. David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr Iain Carlisle
	Ms Gillian McMaster
	Mr Ian Crozier
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms. Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. FOI Related Papers**

Mr Gamble updated the Board following a review of the CEO report and the Minute in question. It was found that the Minute was almost word for word that of the CEO report. Mr Gamble proposed that the relevant section of the CEO report would be issued on the basis the Minute is already on the Agency website.

The Board were in agreement with this proposal.

**5. AOB**

Mr McCallum issued a Sub-Committee membership Request. It was agreed that all Board members would return their response by Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021.

Mr McAdam confirmed he would be part of the Audit & Risk Committee.

Mr Freddie Kettle confirmed he would be part of the Grants Committee.

**6. Date of Next Meeting**

Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 @6.00pm via Zoom

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
194<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.30PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms Lavinia Tilson
	Mr Freddie Kettyle (Vice Chair)
	Mr Allen McAdam
	Ms Julie Andrews
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Mr Richard Hanna, Director of Educational & Language
	Ms Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Ms Karyn Devenney
	Mr Iain Carlisle
	Mr David McNarry
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meetings on 29<sup>th</sup> April, 11<sup>th</sup> May and 27<sup>th</sup> May were noted and approved by the Board.

**5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

## **7. Finance Paper**

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

### ***Internal Audit***

2021 Internal Audit now underway with Fixed Assets, Payroll and HR audits having been completed with satisfactory ratings achieved. The Procurement audit is scheduled to commence 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021.

### ***Annual Accounts***

**2019** – Accounts signed off 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 and following a final review in May 2021 the accounts are now with Foras for translation.

**2020** – Work is ongoing and Annual Accounts have been submitted to Sponsor Departments within specified timescales.

### ***Annual Budget***

Mr McCallum advised that the 2021 baseline budget had been approved by the NSMC in May. The agreed baseline uplift of £206k had been agreed by Sponsor and Finance Departments, but not yet by full NSMC, but Departments are content that we begin to draw down the additional funds from July.

### ***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

Mr McCallum updated the Board on the Performance Actual Vs Budget and advised that the relaxation of restrictions surrounding Covid-19 presented an opportunity to re-profile the budget. The overall budget is over committed at this time due to uncertainty around what activity we will be able to carry out later in the year.

### ***Fraud Report***

Mr McCallum updated the Board in relation to the previously reported potential fraud issue. The matter has been resolved without loss to the Agency or the funded group which had been the target of an external fraud.

### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***Statutory Obligations Report***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***Prompt Payments***

The report was noted by the Board.

### ***HR Report***



Mr McCallum updated the board and advised that the permanent vacancies of Grants Officer and Digital Marketing Officer were filled during June 2021. The report was noted by the Board.

### **7.1 Policy Update**

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board:

- Employee Exit Policy

### **7.2 Risk Register**

Mr McCallum proposed that Cyber Security should be included as a separate item to IT on the Risk register, the Board approved this recommendation and the full report was noted by the Board.

### **7.3 Marketing Report**

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

### **7.4 2020 and 2021 Non-Industrial Pay Awards**

Mr McCallum presented the recommendations to the Board which were unanimously approved.

## **8. Financial Memorandum**

Mr Crozier provided an update on the Financial Memorandum and advised that a document would be available to the Board by the next meeting, the update was noted by the Board.

## **9. Committee Terms of Reference**

Mr McCallum delivered the detail on the terms of reference for the Board Sub Committees listed below, which were noted and agreed by the Board.

- 9.1 Audit & Risk Committee Terms of Reference
- 9.2 Grants & Grants Appeal Committees Terms of Reference
- 9.3 Personnel Committee Terms of Reference
- 9.4 Policy Committee Terms of Reference

## **10. Education Report**

Mr Hanna delivered the detail on the Education Report, which was noted by the Board.

**11. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

**12. AOB**

Members discussed the potential for return to more normalized working arrangements for staff. Mr Crozier advised that preparations were in place for returning to the office, the main stumbling block remained the regulations requiring people to work from home where possible, which had not yet been relaxed.

**13. Date of Next Board Meeting**

To be agreed.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
195<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
26<sup>th</sup> August 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.00PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms Lavinia Tilson
	Mr Freddie Kettyle (Vice Chair)
	Mr Allen McAdam
	Ms Julie Andrews
	Mr Iain Carlisle
	Mr David McNarry
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Mr Richard Hanna, Director of Educational & Language
	Ms Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Ms Karyn Devenney
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meetings on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021 were noted and approved by the Board.

**5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

## **7. Finance Paper**

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

### ***Internal Audit***

2021 Internal Audit now underway with Fixed Assets, Payroll and HR audits having been completed with satisfactory ratings achieved. The Procurement audit is now complete and we are awaiting audit recommendations. Governance & Risk, Grants and Outreach & Education Audits will be completed later in the year.

### ***Annual Accounts***

**2019** – Accounts signed off 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 and following a final review in May 2021 the accounts were translated by Foras and now ready for laying – awaiting a date for this.

**2020** – Work is ongoing and Annual Accounts have been submitted to Sponsor Departments within specified timescales. NIAO are hopeful to have completed by 03 October 2021 and certified (pending completion of Foras and the consolidation).

### ***Annual Budget***

Mr McCallum advised that the 2021 baseline budget had been approved by the NSMC in May. The agreed baseline uplift of £206k had been agreed by Sponsor and Finance Departments, but not yet by full NSMC, but Departments are content that we begin to draw down the additional funds from July. Budget re-profiling was carried out to incorporate this additional funding.

### ***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

Mr McCallum updated the Board on the Performance Actual Vs Budget and advised that the relaxation of restrictions surrounding Covid-19 and additional funding presented an opportunity to re-profile the budget.

Mr Hanna confirmed that Education budget was more a profiling issue and assured the Board that the budget would be utilised by year end.

### ***Fraud Report***

Mr McCallum updated the Board in relation to the previously reported potential fraud issue. The matter has been resolved without loss to the Agency or the funded group which had been the target of an external fraud.

***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

***Statutory Obligations Report***

The report was noted by the Board.

***Prompt Payments***

The report was noted by the Board.

***HR Report***

Mr McCallum updated the board and advised that the permanent vacancies of Grants Officer and Digital Marketing Officer were filled during June 2021. The report was noted by the Board.

**7.1 Policy Update**

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board:

- Disaster Recovery
- Project Management
- Visitor & Security Procedures
- Fraud Prevention Policy
- Fraud Response Plan
- Grants Appeal Procedure
- Customer Charter
- Data Classification
- Conflict of Interest
- Drawdown Procedure

**7.2 Risk Register**

Mr McCallum proposed that Cyber Security was now a separate item to IT on the Risk register, the report was noted by the Board.

**7.3 Marketing Report**

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

Mr McAdam suggested if the Agency upload more videos from groups who have acquired funding and use current funding groups as ambassadors as these videos tend to be quite engaging.

Mr Gamble agreed that the Agency's standard is very high and has continued to get better as the year has gone on. Mr Gamble agreed that we shouldn't neglect the unpolished/unedited pictures.

**7.4 Disability Action Plan**

Mr McCallum presented the recommendations to the Board which were unanimously approved.

**7.5 Corefunded Activity Reports Monreagh Qtr 1**

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

**7.6 Corefunded Activity Reports Monreagh Qtr 2**

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

**7.7 Corefunded Activity Reports Ulster-Scots Community Network Qtr 2**

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

**7.8 Corefunded Activity Reports Ulster-Scots Community Network Qtr 2**

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

**8. Financial Memorandum**

Mr Crozier provided an update on the Financial Memorandum and advised that the finalised document was expected next week and would be with the Board for the next meeting.

**9. Ulster-Scot Newspaper Proposal**

Mr McCallum delivered the report.

After a discussion the Board agreed that the Director of Corporate Services should revisit the figures with the newspaper supplier to double check the accuracy of the costings for a final time.

**Action Point** – Mr McCallum to seek confirmation of figures provided and present to the Board next month for further discussion.

**10. Education Report**

Mr Hanna delivered the detail on the Education Report, which was noted by the Board.

**11. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

**12.    AOB**

Members discussed the potential for return to more normalized working arrangements for staff. Mr Crozier advised that preparations were in place for returning to the office, the main stumbling block remained the regulations requiring people to work from home where possible, which had not yet been relaxed.

The Agency is hoping to have return by end of September due to IT implementation.

**13.    Date of Next Board Meeting**

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting would be circulated as soon as possible.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
196<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
6<sup>th</sup> October 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency  
6.30PM via Zoom**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Mr Freddie Kettle (Vice Chair)
	Ms Karyn Devenney
	Mr Allen McAdam
	Ms Julie Andrews
	Mr Iain Carlisle
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
<b>Apologies:</b>	Ms Lavinia Tilson
	Mr David McNarry
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**2. Apologies**

The Board noted apologies from Ms Lavinia Tilson. Mr McNarry was unable to attend due a delay in receipt of papers and meeting invitation.



### **3. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

### **4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> August 2021 were noted and approved by the Board.

### **5. Matters Arising**

Mr Crozier confirmed that Mr McCallum had sought confirmation from the Newsletter regarding their prices and quotation originally received were confirmed as being correct. In light of this it was agreed to proceed with the Belfast Telegraph.

### **6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

### **7. Finance Paper**

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

#### ***Internal Audit***

2021 Internal Audit now underway with Procurement, Fixed Assets, Payroll and HR audits having been completed with satisfactory ratings achieved. The Grants audit is now under way and Governance & Risk and Outreach & Education Audits will be completed later in the year.

#### ***Annual Accounts***

**2019** – Accounts signed off 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 and following a final review in May 2021 the accounts were translated by Foras and now ready for laying – it had been hoped that this would have happened by 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 but the Agency is still awaiting a date.

**2020** – Work is ongoing and Annual Accounts have been submitted to Sponsor Departments within specified timescales. NIAO are hopeful to have completed by 03 October 2021 and certified (pending completion of Foras and the consolidation).

#### ***Annual Budget***

Mr McCallum advised that the 2021 baseline budget had been approved by the NSMC in May. The agreed baseline uplift of £206k had been agreed by Sponsor and

Finance Departments, but not yet by full NSMC, but Departments are content that we begin to draw down the additional funds from July. Budget re-profiling was carried out to incorporate this additional funding.

#### ***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

The relaxation of restrictions surrounding Covid-19 has presented the opportunity to re-profile the budget. The overall budget is still over committed at this time due to uncertainty around what activity we will be able to carry out later in the year. The majority of our grant schemes are now up and running and we know what the financial impact will be and we can now reallocate further funding to other projects that we have in reserve. Currently we have utilised 43% of the budget at the end of August 2021.

Mr Gamble sought clarification in relation to spending on the Education Budget. Mr Crozier confirmed that contingency measures were in operation to mitigate against underspends.

#### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

#### ***Statutory Obligations Report***

The report was noted by the Board.

#### ***Prompt Payments***

The report was noted by the Board.

#### ***HR Report***

Mr McCallum updated the board and advised that the permanent vacancies of Grants Officer and Digital Marketing Officer were filled during June 2021. The report was noted by the Board.

### **7.1 Policy Update**

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board:

- Internet Usage
- IT Strategy

### **7.2 IT Business Central Proposal**

Mr McCallum presented a paper to the Board, which was approved in principle.

### **7.3 A&R Committee Update**

Ms Andrews presented a verbal update to the Board following the last Audit & Risk Committee Meeting.

Ms Andrews advised that the A&R had questioned both internal and external audit if there would be consequences/penalties for the Agency for not adopting the McKee Judgement in the interim but rather continued in a common sense approach after having taken due consideration with the Board, Audit & Risk Committee and own independent legal advice.

#### **7.4 Marketing Review**

Mr McCallum presented the recommendations to the Board which were unanimously approved.

#### **7.5 Financial Memorandum**

Mr McCallum advised that the Financial Memorandum was now finalised. The Board noted same.

### **8. Grants**

#### **8.0 Grants Committee Summary**

The report presented by Mr McCallum was noted by the board.

#### **8.1 Monreagh Funding Uplift**

The proposed uplift of €10,000 for Monreagh Ulster-Scots Heritage Centre, East Donegal was approved. The Board asked that the Agency provide additional support to the group to help them to broaden their range of income streams.

Board members expressed an interest in holding a Board meeting in East Donegal and visiting Monreagh during 2022.

Ms Andrews left the meeting.

#### **8.2 Covid Resilience Grant Larger Groups Funding**

Mr McCallum spoke to the paper highlighting the absence of required Board approvals for four grants in the Larger Groups category of the Ulster-Scots Covid Resilience Fund. He explained the circumstances in which the error was made and that although the formal approval had not been sought, both the Board and DfC were otherwise fully sighted on the grants. The Board noted the content of the report and agreed that the grants would have been approved at the time if they had been presented.

Ms Andrews returned to the meeting.

**9. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

**10. AOB**

Mr McCallum presented a paper updating the Board on the Small Events Grant Programme. After discussion, the Board noted the contents of the report and agreed to the recommendations therein, viz, (i) further simplify the process for Small Events Grants and revise the capped rates; (ii) open a call for a Border Counties Covid Grant for overheads and small equipment. The Board agreed to exercise its discretion to approve a 90% intervention rate in order to ensure equity between jurisdictions, in light of the anticipated Covid grant programme for Northern Ireland.

**11. Date of Next Board Meeting**

The date of next meeting will be 4<sup>th</sup> November and will be 'in-person'.

Signed: .....

Dated: .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
197<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
4<sup>th</sup> November 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency, Headquarters Belfast  
2.00pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms Lavinia Tilson
	Ms Karyn Devenney (via Zoom)
	Mr Allen McAdam (via Zoom)
	Ms Julie Andrews
	Mr Iain Carlisle (via Zoom)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Mr Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Ms Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr Freddie Kettle (Vice Chair)
	Mr David McNarry
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**2. Apologies**

The Board noted apologies from Mr David McNarry and Mr Freddie Kettle.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

**4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

An amendment was requested with regards to the note on the McKee Judgement in the minutes of the meeting on 06<sup>th</sup> October 2021. Updated minutes to be circulated for approval by the Board.

**5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

**6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier provided an overview on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

**7. Finance Paper**

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

***Internal Audit***

2021 Internal Audit now underway with Procurement, Fixed Assets, Payroll, HR and Grants audits having been completed with satisfactory ratings achieved. The Outreach & Education audit is currently underway and the Governance & Risk audit is due to start imminently.

***Annual Accounts***

**2019** – Accounts signed off 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2021 and following a final review in May 2021 the accounts were translated by Foras and are now ready for laying – it had been hoped that this would have happened by 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 but the Agency is still awaiting a date.

**2020** – Work is ongoing and the Annual Accounts have been submitted to Sponsor Departments within specified timescales. Audit is still ongoing but is in the final stages.

***Annual Budget***

Mr McCallum presented the report advising that a re-profiling had been carried out and outlining the expected year end position.

The report was noted by the Board.

***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

The report was noted by the Board.

***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

***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.

**7.1 Community impact Programme**

Mr McCallum presented the report and recommendations which were unanimously approved by the Board.

Mr Gamble requested that quarterly reports from CIP groups were shared with the Board. The need for these groups to identify and apply for additional sources of funding and not rely solely on the Agency was highlighted.

**7.2 IT Business Central Proposal**

Mr McCallum presented a verbal update to the Board.

**7.3 A&R Committee Update**

Ms Andrews presented a verbal update to the Board.

**7.4 Marketing Review**

Ms McMaster presented a verbal update to the Board.

**7.5 Grants Committee Update**

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

## **7.6 Policy Revisions**

The Policy revisions listed were approved by the Board:

- Payroll Policy
- Month End & Year End Procedures
- Inefficiency – Poor Performance Policy
- Inefficiency – Sickness Absence Policy
- Probation Policy
- Secondment Policy
- Succession Planning

## **8. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

## **9. Baseline Budget Uplift Priorities for 2022**

Mr Crozier presented the report and recommendations which was unanimously approved by the Board.

## **10. Business Plan Targets for 2022**

Mr Crozier presented a paper to the Board detailing the Agency's proposed Business Plan targets for 2022, which were approved by the Board.

## **11. Education Report**

Mr Hanna presented a short presentation to the Board highlighting the main Learning and Educational resources completed to date. The Board noted same.

Mr Hanna confirmed that Ms Elliott would issue link for all digital resources following the meeting.

## **12. AOB**

Ms Andrews confirmed she had attended the DfC Audit Forum.



**13.    Date of Next Meeting**

The date of next meeting will be 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021 in Belfast.

Signed:                    .....

Dated:                     .....

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch**

**Meeting No:** 200

**Date:** 24th February 2022

**Paper No:** 4.0

**Agenda Item:** Minutes of 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021  
*198<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting*

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
198<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
2<sup>nd</sup> December 2021  
Ulster-Scots Agency, Headquarters via zoom  
2.00pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Keith Gamble (Chairman)
	Ms Lavinia Tilson
	Ms Karyn Devenney (via Zoom)
	Mr Allen McAdam (via Zoom)
	Ms Julie Andrews
	Mr Iain Carlisle (via Zoom)
	Mr Freddie Kettyle (Vice Chair)
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Mr Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Ms Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	Mr David McNarry
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**1. Welcome from the Chairperson**

The Chairman, Mr Gamble, welcomed everyone to the 198<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board.

**2. Apologies**

The Board noted apologies from Mr David McNarry.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

No interests were declared.

#### **4. Minutes of Last Meeting**

Amended Meetings from 06<sup>th</sup> October 2021 and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2021 were approved by the Board.

#### **5. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

#### **6. Progress Report**

Mr Crozier provided an overview on the Progress Report, which was noted by the Board.

Ms McMaster updated the Board on Leid Week which was noted by the Board.

#### **7. Finance Paper**

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

##### ***Internal Audit***

2021 Internal Audit – five audits have now been completed which achieved Satisfactory Assurance. Final two audits to be completed week beginning 6<sup>th</sup> December 2021.

##### ***Annual Accounts***

**2019** – Accounts laid 19<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**2020** – Accounts are now in draft format

##### ***Annual Budget***

Mr McCallum presented the report advising that a re-profiling had been carried out and outlining the expected year end position.

The report was noted by the Board.

##### ***Performance Actual Vs Budget***

The report was noted by the Board.

##### ***Gifts & Hospitality***

The report was noted by the Board.

##### ***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.

**7.1 Marketing Review**

Ms McMaster presented the report which was noted by the Board.

Mr McAdam raised the suggestion for Cultural Ambassadors to help raise awareness amongst our communities.

Ms Karen Devenney left the meeting at 3.05pm.

**7.2 Grant Committee Summary**

Mr McCallum presented the report which was not by the Board.

**7.3 Corefunded Approval Request**

Mr McCallum presented the paper to the Board.

The Board approved the paper subject to the following conditions:

- The group was advised that there is no automatic right to increased funding
- The group would be expected to demonstrate that additional sources of funding were being actively pursued.
- The group would be required to participate in quarterly accountability meetings, as with the other core funding client.

**Action: Mr McCallum**

**8. CEO Report**

Mr Crozier delivered the detail on the CEO report, which was noted by the Board.

**9. AOB**

There was no other business.

**10.    Date of Next Meeting**

The date of next meeting to confirmed in the New Year.

Signed:                    .....

Dated:                    .....

**Action Points arising from Board Meeting 2nd December 2021**

<b>AP</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Owner</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1</b>	Corefunded group to be advised of conditional grant approval.	<b>D McCallum</b>	
<b>2</b>			
<b>3</b>			
<b>4</b>			
<b>5</b>			
<b>6</b>			
<b>7</b>			
<b>8</b>			

**Tha Boord o Ulster-Scotch  
199<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting  
16<sup>th</sup> December 2021  
Via Zoom  
6.00pm**

<b>Present:</b>	Mr Freddie Kettyle (Chair)
	Ms Lavinia Tilson
	Ms Karyn Devenney (via Zoom)
	Mr Allen McAdam (via Zoom)
	Mr Trevor Wilson
<b>In Attendance:</b>	Mr Ian Crozier, Chief Executive Officer
	Mr David McCallum, Director of Corporate Services
	Mr Richard Hanna, Director of Education & Language
	Ms Gillian McMaster, Director of Development
<b>Apologies:</b>	
<b>Recording Secretary:</b>	Ms Lorna Elliott (HR/Office Manager)

**2. Welcome from the Chairperson**

The Vice-Chairman, Mr Kettyle, took the chair and welcomed everyone to the 199<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Board.

**2. Apologies**

No apologies were noted by the Board.



### **3. Covid Recovery Programme - Covid 19 Deficit Funding Scheme**

Mr Crozier presented an in depth report of a proposed scheme as set by the Department of Communities in which the Agency will act as an implementation Body. The Agency has liaised with the department to ensure a scheme can be offered to the Ulster-Scots Community that works both for the community and Agency from a governance perspective.

The scheme is to be launched as early as next week and close 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 with all monies to be spent 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022. It is expected that Deirdre Hargey MLA will announce the scheme by the end of this week.

The Board noted that the most challenging part of the scheme would be getting applications completed and completed correctly due to the complexity of scheme.

Mr Wilson suggested virtual workshops by Ulster-Scot Community Network be arranged.

Mr McAdam raised the possibility of investing in resources from independent parties to help community groups complete applications.

Ms Tilson and Mr Kettle commented on possible concerns on resources and timeframes but overall supported the proposal.

Mr McCallum advised that additional staffing resources to assess the scheme were being sought and had hoped to have additional staff in place early January.

The Board supported the Agency recommendation to carry act an implementation body for the Covid 19 Deficit Funding Scheme following receipt of an Internal Audit GAP analysis being completed and further written assurances from the Department on specific areas.

