

Board Update #8 - August 2019



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National Conference - 15th to 17th November 2019

Taking on board the feedback from the membership concerning the provincial conferences and Annual General Meetings held earlier this year, there will be a National Conference held from 15th to 17th November. This is to meet the needs of members and to share information on a range of initiatives. With the establishment of the new structures in Scouting Ireland, the Board feel that the conference is an opportune time to update members on progress and to gather members feedback concerning these changes.

The format will be developed over the coming weeks by a conference organising committee (to be established) made up of volunteers and staff. We will be seeking volunteers for this committee through an open call. It is expected that there will be a return to opportunities for policy debate, proposal presentations, knowledge-sharing workshops and interactive sessions.

The roll-out of a national conference does not undermine the Provincial Conference process. It will, we hope, strengthen it, and we would encourage Provincial Commissioners to proceed with organising Provincial Conferences throughout the scout year to harness the views and priorities of Scout Groups on the ground. These conferences may have a much wider remit in future, concentrating, should the Province wish, on matters such as training and/or learning opportunities, social events, policy discussion and debate, etc.

Update on Financial Accounts and EGM

As stated in the last Board update [Click here](#), and at the commissioners meeting and briefing, the material increase in the provision for liabilities in the financial statements meant that the Board needed to undertake an assessment of going concern. This involved considering a report from Mason, Hayes & Curran Solicitors, a separate report from Sheehan & Company Solicitors which outlined likely timelines for current legal proceedings, and budgets & cash flow for 2019/2020. The Board made a number of very challenging financial decisions which will impact on Scout Groups, but as a consequence of these decisions were in a position to determine that Scouting Ireland is a going concern.

The accounts are now with our auditors and we expect they will be ready for consideration by the Audit & Risk Management Committee ready for Board approval before the end of September.

Once the accounts are approved by the Board a date for an EGM will be set to lay the accounts before the membership.



Wind Down of Association

This process is taking longer than expected with outstanding issues being worked on in partnership with the National Management Committee. We will continue to update you as significant progress is made.

Chief Executive Officer Recruitment

The Board has engaged a recruitment company, Principal Connections, who are working with the Board to prepare a job specification for Scouting Ireland's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The position has now been advertised with over 25 responses received and a long list of 13 candidates selected for first-round interviews.

Shortlisted candidates, following the first round, will be further assessed and interviewed by a number of directors together with suitable external expertise, will constitute a panel recommended to the Board by the end of September/early October.

Board Recruitment

Currently, there are four vacancies on the Board: one casual position and three co-opted positions. We have recently asked for expressions of interest for the casual position via open call and the responses received are being considered.

For the co-opted positions, the Board has engaged Board Match Ireland (www.boardmatch.ie) to recruit suitable external people who may be interested in being a member of the Board. As part of this process Board Match Ireland consider the skills and competencies of the current Board members, identify gaps and use this information to inform their recruitment process.

Barrister's Report Update

The Barrister's Report is being processed by the National Management Committee (NMC). There has been an unavoidable delay over the past few months but the Board has been informed that the NMC will make significant progress soon.

Groups in the Rol and the Charities Regulator

Things are progressing with the Charity Regulator (CRA) for Scout Groups in the Republic of Ireland. Following a positive meeting with Eamon O'Halloran, Head of Registration at Charities Regulator and his staff, the route for Groups to become charities has become clearer.

- A set of sample documentation has been sent to the regulator for comment and observation.
- Scouting Ireland is currently being set up on the CRA's test system. Once the sample documentation is in order then test submissions will be run using the test system.
- Following the successful conclusion of testing, it is proposed to pilot the live system with several pilot Scout Groups.
- Once the pilot Groups are registered and any issues ironed out, registration for all Scout Groups will commence.
- It is proposed that Groups will register at special Scout County workshops facilitated by staff. It is anticipated that the workshops will take place over a few months and that all Groups will be registered in the coming scouting year.

Fundraising Initiatives

The Board is considering a number of proposals for a new all-island fundraiser. These will be developed further using focus groups and brought back to the Board in September 2019.

The Board welcomes other suggestions and/or proposals for national fundraisers and all members are encouraged to send suggestions by email to board@scouts.ie as soon as possible.

Transition Overview

The transition to the new SI structures is well underway. An open call for the Sub-Committees has gone out and is now closed. The Transition, Quality of Scouting and Governance & Compliance panels have completed interviews and the first induction is taking place this weekend for the Transition Sub-Committee. Induction for the other Sub-Committees will follow shortly. Candidates for the Audit & Risk Sub-Committee have been shortlisted with interviews taking place over the next two weeks. The Nomination & Remuneration Sub-Committee and the Safeguarding Sub-Committee was not filled during this process however, a second open call for both is currently being facilitated by Board Match Ireland. We look forward to receiving applications for these last two Sub-Committees.

Department Core Teams

Open calls [Click here](#) for the new department's Core Teams went out on the 23rd August 2019 with a closing date of the 13th of September 2019. Interviews for the Core Teams will take place during the weekend of the 28/29th September 2019. Departmental Managers are scheduled to be in place by the 14th September 2019.

Once Core Teams have been selected they will receive an induction for their department role. Core Teams will elect their own Volunteer Chair at their first meeting. Core Teams, once they are up and running, will then look at the different

Project Teams required for their Department. Following this, the department will advertise for these in late November 2019.

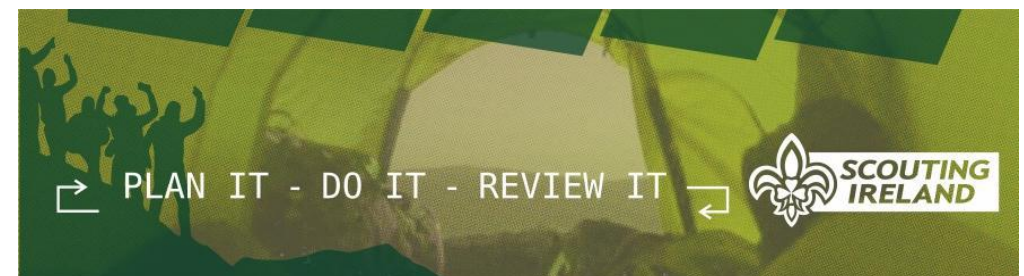
The co-option of three directors is currently being handled by Board Match Ireland. It is hoped the co-opted directors will be in place by the 31st October 2019.

It is our vision that the new SI structures will be fully implemented by the 31st of January 2020.

Strategic Plan 2020 - 2023

The current Scouting Ireland strategy expires at the end of the year. A new three-year strategy will be developed over the coming months. This will be published in the new year. The new strategy will be informed by extensive consultation with our membership between now and Christmas.

The approved strategy will be supported by a comprehensive implementation plan with clear actions, measurable targets and key performance indicators (KPI's). It will be used to aid the Board in monitoring and evaluating the progress of Scouting Ireland. The CEO, department managers, core teams and project teams will use the strategy to shape all actions and activities.





Disciplinary Structures

As part of the move to modernise our practices and meet the commitment made to comply with the Governance Code and implement the recommendations of the Van Turnhout Report, the Board approved a suite of disciplinary policies in November 2018 and appointed Denis Kirby as Disciplinary Officer on an interim basis.

Following feedback from Scout Groups, from Denis himself and from the Disputes Resolution & Appeals Panel (DRAP) on the workings of the policies and comments from Scouters and other stakeholders, the Board has decided that the burden of such a position may prove too onerous on a single individual carrying out the function. Coupled with striving for a model that ensures best practice, transparency and efficiency, the Board have augmented the structure to move from a single person holding the position of Disciplinary Officer to that of a panel of three people. One of this panel will be from outside Scouting Ireland and the other two to be recruited by open call internally. The open call was issued by email on the 23rd of August 2019 and can be found here [Click here.](#)

The Board would like to express its thanks to Denis Kirby for stepping into the breach as interim Disciplinary Officer over the last several months and also thank him for his work and service to Scouting Ireland in that role.

World Scout Jamboree 2019

The Board would like to congratulate the contingent to the World Scout Jamboree for representing Scouting Ireland. Specifically, it would like to thank the contingent management team, the troop leader teams, patrol leaders and international service team for all the work done to bring over 400 scouts to the jamboree in the United States, to their after-camp experience in Canada and safely home.

World Jamboree photos courtesy of the contingent communications lead - James Murphy

Confidentiality

The Board endeavours to communicate as much as possible. However, certain matters discussed by or dealt with by the Board are sensitive or subject to constraints beyond our control. We ask for everyone's understanding and acknowledge how frustrating this may be for those affected. The Board continues to work in the best interests of Scouting Ireland and welcome all contributions and suggestions.

Open Calls and Feedback

To rise to the many challenges that we face, and to ensure our focus is on the scout experience for all our members, especially youth, the Board needs your help. Over the coming months, there will be open calls for various roles and tasks. Also, the Board is fully appreciative of the long hours put in and dedication of members at all levels of Scouting Ireland. If you have ideas about how to build a stronger Scouting Ireland then get in touch and get involved.

Email address: board@scouts.ie



Photo shows the Irish delegation to the European Scout Conference in Croatia

Board of directors of Scouting Ireland

Lisa Barnes - Ned Brennan - Peter Garrad - Mary Hogg - Pat Kidney - Dermot Lacey - Paul Mannion - Brian Smith - Adrian Tennant