



Board Update #15 – September 2021

Dear Fellow Scouts,

Hopefully, the new Scouting year finds you well. It is great that many of us are continuing to Scout or are restarting as Covid - 19 restrictions ease. As always, our priority remains focused on having as many young people Scouting as possible. To support this, our volunteer teams and staff are focused on supporting groups, counties, and provinces with training, vetting and other supports.

The Covid – 19 guidelines look promising allowing many activities and meetings to happen which were previously restricted. Hopefully

restrictions will continue to ease, meaning we can move toward ‘normal’ Scouting. Please [click here](#) for further information on [Covid - 19 guidance for Scout Groups](#).

Face-to Face Meeting

The pandemic has restricted face-to-face meetings and reduced our opportunities for two-way communications. As restrictions ease, we plan to rectify this. We have postponed the planned online Group Leader and Commissioner Conference from September, in favour of a in-person/hybrid event in Tullamore on the 6th of November and we’re looking forward to a positive interactive experience for all attendees. The board has set up a working group to address the feedback from our membership at the AGM (and afterwards) and are working on a number of initiatives – including a plan that two directors will meet each of the PCs to listen and understand their concerns and to receive suggestions for improvements.

We wish to meet Scouters, Group Leaders, Provincial and National Conferences and steps have been taken to ensure that such can take place this year or early next year – subject only to Government Covid

Regulations and dates announced in the [July Board update](#). We all look forward to more face-to-face engagement.

The Board fully notes the outcome of the voting at our AGM in May 2021. In particular regarding Motion 12 and 18. We are actively working to ensure that the issues leading to these outcomes are explored and assessed. A number of initiatives are underway to achieve this (including meeting with PCs and the recent GL survey). We will update everyone on the detail over the coming weeks with a plan which be “workshopped” at the Group Leader and Commissioner Conference in November.

Engagement with the Chief Scout

It is fantastic to see our Chief Scout engaging and interacting with the membership and she has our full support in doing so. Chief Jill also led our delegation to the World Scout Youth Forum and was a member of our delegation to the World Scout Conference. Since her election, she has attended three board meetings and has also attended the regular scheduled meeting with the national youth representatives and will continue to do so as she and Scouting Ireland requires. Our Chief Scout

frequently meets with our CEO. These have been positive, fruitful, and engaged experiences and we are committed to ensuring all appropriate supports are given to her, respecting the new roles of both the Board and Chief Scout as well as other volunteers at a national level and staff members. Between board meetings she also meets with the chair of the board. The Chief Scout is fully aware of her role as Chairperson of the Motions Committee and of the Company AGM and the Board will fully support her in the completion of those roles.

Disciplinary Policy

The disciplinary and grievances policies together with their associated procedures has been updated, approved and [published](#) as of 16 of July 2021. As with all disciplinary issues these are never issues, we would like to have to deal with, but in order to ensure good governance and to strive to behave with integrity, we must, when necessary, issue disciplinary sanctions. We are all aware, unfortunately, of what can happen when we fail to address bad and or inappropriate behaviour. We must always strive, as individuals and collectively as Scouting Ireland, to meet our Scout Law and Promise, where good values and exemplary behaviours are always the

goal. We must live our values as best we can. Unfortunately, when individuals actively and consistently do not meet these values, their behaviours must be addressed. There is no place in Scouting for adults who actively choose not to be role models for our young people. [Please find here our Disciplinary Policies, Procedures and other associated documents.](#)

Winding Down Scouting Ireland the Association

We are grateful to the members of the NMC who agreed to steer the process in Oct 2018 when it was envisaged that it would take up to six months to transfer all assets and liabilities to Scouting Ireland CLG.

It has subsequently been established, post-Oct 2018, that there are a number of legal, financial and logistical matters to be attended to before the efficient, orderly and effective transfer of the Assets and Property of the Association to the CLG can be completed. Therefore, as previously proposed the Association is to be reduced to a Specific Purpose Entity (SPE) with a small membership and a small governance committee which would meet from time to time and would be solely tasked with supporting

the necessary work involved in the resolution of the legal, financial, and logistical matters be attended to, to complete the transfer of assets and liabilities to Scouting Ireland CLG. This SPE will have no operational responsibility for supporting scouting in Ireland.

Membership Policy

Last year, the board approved a new [Membership Policy](#) for the organisation. The Membership Policy has a simple premise. It states that all members of Scouting Ireland should be linked to an active Scout Group. There are many ways to do this. All Scouters who are affected by the new policy have been offered assistance with joining a Scout Group. Most Scouters affected have already done what was needed to regularised their membership. This support shall continue to be provided. Please contact National Office should you require support. Just as a reminder, [please find our most up to date policy here.](#)

Financial Situation

The Board is continuously monitoring and assessing the financial position of Scouting Ireland, It is a key function of any Board of Directors and we,

the Board of Scouting Ireland, continue to do so. We are deeply appreciative of the huge number of Scout Groups who have contributed all, most or some of their census fees. We are also grateful to be working with Scout Groups who are finding it difficult to do so. One point we would like to highlight is that we do not want the financial impact of Covid-19 on our Scout Groups to be a barrier for young people to Scouting. We are adamant that Scout Groups who can't pay registrations fees can continue to provide Scouting to the young people of Ireland.

If Scout Groups can pay, they should pay. If Scout Groups are finding payment challenging, please speak with your PSO immediately. They will support your Scout Group in a tailored solution which takes account of your Scout Groups particular circumstances.

We are especially grateful to the Scout Shop (Outdoor Adventure Store) for their donation of €100,000 which together with Scout Group payments and an additional grant allowed us to end short time for our staff enabling them to provide support to our Scout Groups 5 days a week once again. We recognise the need to diversify our sources of funding. This is

imperative to the financial sustainability of Scouting Ireland. Shortly, we will be asking you, our membership, in an open call, to bring your skills and experiences together to assist with this task.

Finally

This is one of the most exciting times of the Scouting year. We are all actively gearing up to provide scouting to our existing and new youth members – It is essentially our Scouting New Year. We, the Board of Directors, will continue to take decisions that are in the best interest of the future of our Movement. We believe in the value of Scouting to young people, to our communities and to our Country. We thank you for your continued involvement and look forward to your support as we rebuild Scouting Ireland.

Yours in Scouting

Pat Kidney

Chairperson of the Board of Scouting Ireland

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