



**Provincial Council Meeting - May 5th 2024**  
[Online]

**MINUTES**

**Attendees:** Theresa Gallagher (Cathaoirleach), David Browne (Leas Cathaoirleach), Michael Fitzgerald (Cisteor), Patrick Ballantyne (Runai), Evin Downey (Treorai na Gaeilge), Orlagh Reilly (St Patrick's), John Goulding (PRO), Mick Nixon (Auditor), Patrick Gallagher (St Wilfrid's), Mairi Docherty (Youth Officer), Calum McGregor (Youth Officer), Roisin Reid (St James the Great), Wendy Doherty (St James the Great), Conor Walsh (North London), Danny McKendry (St James the Great).

**Staff:** Paddy Callaghan, Elske Simpson, Erin Brown.

**Apologies:** Mick Nevin (Ard Comhairle, East London), Kathleen Collins (Cambridge).

**Votes of Sympathy:** Andy Tarbert, Peter Teed, Larry O'Hanlon, Kevin Brady, Nora Madden, Phil McManus, Terry Madden, Jim Brown, Mary Brogan.

**Conflicts of Interest:** Calum McGregor acknowledged that Paddy Callaghan and Moira Callaghan are cousins of his.

**ACTION POINTS**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Who</b>
Online branch memberships to be paid to branches	PC, MF
Audited accounts to be distributed when ready	PC, PB
Confirmation of adjudicators seminar & dates	John Burke
Irish language materials to the Northern Region	ES, ED
All Britain timetable to be distributed ASAP	PB

## **1. Action Points from Convention**

Patrick gave a brief overview of the action points from the Convention.

- *Concert Tour:* There is no Irish Tour Concert going this year, so doesn't seem to be as high.
- *Branch Memberships:* Not sure if all payments have been sorted, PC will chase these up.
- *Information:* PB thanked ES for distributing all the different All Britain, TTCT and SCT documents after convention.

## **2. Safeguarding**

TG reminded members that separate meetings for safeguarding are not permitted. You need to contact your DLP and PC if there are any concerns over safeguarding in branches.

## **3. Finances / Banking**

PC gave us an update on the accounting situation for the provincial accounts. Date of accounts was the end of the financial year, and not the end of the Comhaltas year. New accountant has been appointed, and will receive audited accounts as soon as we have them.

PC outlined the situation with our current bank account at Cooperative Banking, who are being taken over by Coventry Building Society. This is problematic as our treasurer works for CBS, so we are in the midst of changing over to Virgin banking.

## **4. New Comhaltas Website**

PC gave an overview of the new website, much more functional and lots more information. Outlined some current teething issues with the website as regards links, particularly in relation to Fleadh rules.

## **5. Education Budget**

Theresa discussed how education project funding is being used to support a branch in Scotland to get additional teaching.

We will also happily take conversations on education projects from other branches if they are interested. Please contact EB or ES if you are interested.

## **6. Staff Projects**

PC acknowledged contributions of staff for supporting day-to-day activities and the All Britain Fleadh.

PC thanked Elske for getting CinB registered as a charity in Scotland.

Reporting task is now going to be more extensive for ESP, more information on this soon.

EB is working a lot on inclusion - "Learn to play" day and the European folk day, looking to set up some important campaigns.

Lots of work has gone into our social media campaign - two newsletters run in parallel, a general one and a branch leaders newsletters. Followers have really grown on our social media platforms, and this is really helpful for us as a charity.

Policy updates are underway, and lots of applications for projects in the process. Funding next year is pivoting heavily towards securing a larger amount of funding to run our annual convention.

### **7. Future Project Bids**

TG: We want to make sure any future project bids are very robust. If you have an idea of a project for your branch or region, please get in touch with ES or PC. If there is a project at any time, please reach out and we'll see what we can do.

For next year's ESP we are not quite there yet. But still shouldn't stop branches/regions from getting in touch as other funds are available.

### **8. Adjudicators Seminar**

TG outlined that the adjudicators seminar should have been held in May. However, it is not going ahead as too short notice and a few other problems. Music sub-committee are hoping to host this in October, looking to John Burke as chair to confirm this.

Spaces are tight, a big cohort from Liverpool and a few from Manchester have indicated that they have interest. Potentially looking at somewhere near Liverpool for an event like this. Emphasis should be on it happening in person.

TG invited members to recommend O18's from their branches/regions who would be suitable to recommend them to us and we will pass it onto the music subcommittee. We are running out of good adjudicators, we have some sit-ins lined up, and some people will be asked back. We would love a good age range for this seminar.

### **9. Gaeilge funding**

We did receive funding from Dublin. We decided to ask regions to put in bids for money for education and Irish language promotion. It was generally a success when used in different regions.

Northern region forgot to run the 'heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. PB acknowledged Ashton children promoting the Irish language at the regional Fleadh. ED to circulate more information to the region - ES to send ED contact information for branches in the region.

There will be more of this at All Britain Fleadh 2024.

### **10. All Britain Fleadh**

PB gave a high-level overview of what's going on with the All Britain Fleadh - key things include a timetable by the end of next week, information about a bar and plan for Fleadh Saturday evening. PB also thanked ES and EB for their work on the adverts and sponsorship.

DB said the awards ceremony will happen at 12, lots of important delegates and people will be held at midday on the Saturday. DB said clerks need to indicate their interest by next week if they want to clerk - v low representation from the Northern and London region.

Awards - Gradam is going to Karen Ryan, Long Service is going to Anna O'Hare (Liverpool) and Barbara Aherne (Manchester). If you think we have missed anyone out, please contact Theresa directly for additional people.

### **11. Big Draw**

Lots of money to be made from the Big Draw this year. Your branches and regions could profit quite extensively this year. TG reminded everyone to consider the Big Draw, lots of good prizes.

### **12. AOB**

MF came in on Fleadh Cheoil na Breataine 2025. There is no venue for the All Britain in 2025, but Newman University is not suitable for this. The regional committee has gone back to the drawing board. Saturday 21st September is lined up for the next Provincial meeting. MF will encourage the Midland regional board to meet ASAP to get something organised.

JG outlined plans for London to host the Convention. Two options - Chigwell Prince Regent and Crown in Cricklewood. There is no update right now from the Meitheal committee to work out what we can afford. The costs for both of these places will be higher, and the travel costs will also be a lot higher. We will get back to JG on this.

DM responded to MF about the chapel in Newman, because churches are often used in Ireland for the competitions. Could a letter come from a church to Newman to encourage them to use the space. MF said he had a similar thought. Chaplain at Newman is from Cork, but she has just pushed back hard on this according to Marian. TG said St James has good contacts in Mullingar, none of the St James members know the priest in Mullingar unfortunately. MF said he might go in and chat to the chaplain and see if we can change her mind.

### **13. Upcoming Meetings**

- Saturday 21st September 2024 - site visit to somewhere in Midlands.

- Thursday 14th November 2024 - online (8PM).
- Saturday 1st - Sunday 2nd March 2025 - annual convention.