

19 June 2002



Irene McGugan MSP

North East Scotland
Shadow Depute Minister for
Children and Education

George Holmes, Deputy Chief Executive
Ulster-Scots Agency
Franklin House
10-12 Brunswick Street
BELFAST BT2 7GE
Northern Ireland.

RECEIVED

21 JUN 2002

Dear Mr Holmes

**Re: DICTIONARY OF TERMINOLOGY RELEVANT TO THE SCOTTISH
PARLIAMENT AND THE NORTHERN IRELAND ASSEMBLY IN SCOTS
AND ENGLISH**

Thank you for your letter of 30th April, which was discussed at the meeting of the Cross-Party Group in the Scottish Parliament on the Scots Language, on 8th May.

Our Group has discussed this issue on a number of occasions and remains keen to have a Scots Dictionary of Parliamentary terms similar to Faclair Na Parlamaid. Within our membership, we have a number of those involved in the newly formed Scots Language Dictionaries, who have done much to stimulate this discussion.

Given that the funding is considerable and that you are exploring the possibility of a joint project with the Scottish Parliament, can I suggest that you contact the Scottish Executive directly to progress this project?

We look forward to hearing of the outcome.

Yours sincerely

Irene McGugan

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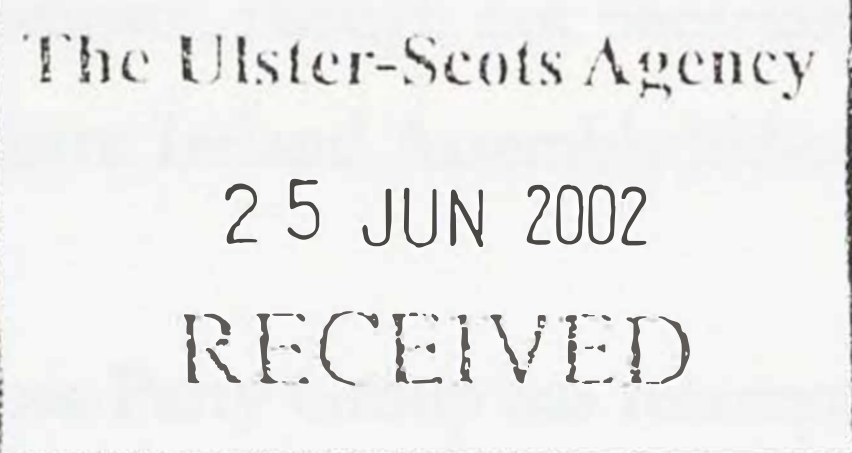
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24 June 2002

Dictionary of Parliamentary Terminology

Dear Sirs,

It has come to my attention that the Ulster-Scots Agency is considering a joint venture to produce a dictionary of parliamentary terms for use in the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament. As one of the primary potential users of such a dictionary in the Province, I am surprised that I have thus far not been consulted. The last nine instances of Scots being used in the Chamber were dependent on translations being provided on an unofficial basis by Assembly staff (the main reason for its more frequent use of late). I feel I should have been of help to the agency in the formulation of its recent approach to the Cross-Party Group on the Scots Language in the Scottish Parliament.

The fact that the agency is considering such a step is great news for Scots, since it implicitly recognises two truths: that Scots is fundamentally the same language in Ulster and Scotland; and that the relevant expertise necessary for development is mainly to be found in Scotland. Clumsy attempts to exaggerate differences between Ulster Scots and English by arbitrary misspelling and the forced combination of incompatible orthographies — as exemplified in the agency's website — have made native speakers believe that it is not their language and posed the danger that Ulster Scots might split away from its mother dialects in Scotland. A sensible parliamentary dictionary with a reformed pan-dialectal orthography could settle many of the outstanding issues, though I should point out that the Irish dictionary is not binding on Hansard editors, and I do not expect any Scots one to be either.

I was amazed to read that the agency plans to base its work on the Scottish Gaelic dictionary produced by TELI. The agency's duty is to Ulster Scots on both sides of the border, and the obvious template to use would be the TELI Irish dictionary, which has the relevant proper names

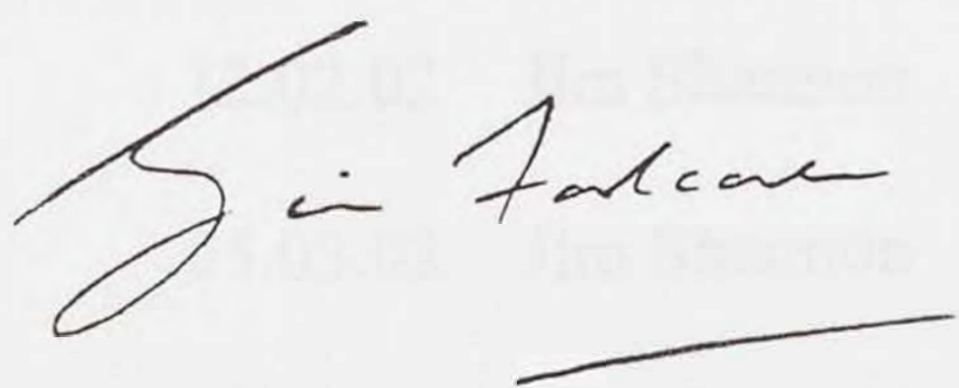
for the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Dáil. If the dictionary is to cover Scotland as well, the Scottish Gaelic dictionary should of course also be used as a template. My information here comes from the minutes of the Cross-Party Group; if it is incorrect, I apologise for an erroneous criticism. A further source to investigate, though not necessarily to accept in every case, would be the Scots actually used in the Northern Ireland Assembly hitherto.

I understand that the Cross-Party Group has recommended that you contact the Scottish Parliament Corporate Body. I regard it as highly unlikely that the body will agree to joint funding, and suggest instead that the agency approach Scottish Language Dictionaries (formerly the SNDA) directly. The organisation is already undertaking the production of an unofficial dictionary for the Cross-Party Group, and the agency might be able to negotiate the production of a joint dictionary with it for a good deal less than the figure suggested, in which case the failure of the Scottish authorities to accept the plan need not necessarily prevent its going forward.

I should also point out that most Scots used in the Northern Ireland Assembly comes from two Members, one of whom uses far more than the other. While I am absolutely in favour of a dictionary from a personal and professional point of view, I feel obligated to point out that the agency may wish to consider a) whether the amount of Scots used warrants a dictionary and b) whether it might be prudent to await the results of the next Assembly elections to see whether Scots is likely to be used to any meaningful extent during its next term. Of course, the dictionary itself may act as a catalyst in that respect. I enclose the relevant data.

I should be extremely grateful if the agency could keep me informed of developments regarding the project. If it wishes me to address a meeting formally or to discuss the issues with the project leader, I should be very happy to do so.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Gavin Falconer', with a horizontal line drawn underneath the name.

Gavin Falconer

Ulster-Scots in the Northern Ireland Assembly

Session 1998-99

09.11.98	Ian Adamson	Ulster-Scots Academy (63 words)
09.03.99	Ian Adamson	Assembly Standing Orders (Ulster-Scots) (63 words)

Session 1999-2000

27.06.00	Jim Shannon	The Arts in Northern Ireland (Ulster-Scots) (137 words)
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Session 2000-01

18.12.00	Ian Adamson	Budget (2001-2) (Ulster-Scots) (692 words)
18.12.00	Mr Speaker	Budget (2001-2) (Ulster-Scots) (16 words)
18.12.00	Jim Shannon	Budget (2001-2) (Ulster-Scots) (55 words)
19.12.00	Ian Adamson	Languages: North/South Ministerial Council Sectoral Meeting (Ulster-Scots) (92 words)
06.03.01	Ian Adamson	Programme for Government (Ulster-Scots) (348 words)
06.03.01	Jim Shannon	Programme for Government (Targeting Social Need) (104 words)

Session 2001-02

01.10.01	Jim Shannon	Townland Names (52 words)
11.12.01	Jim Shannon	Health Service (67 words)
12.02.02	Jim Shannon	Golden Jubilee (144 words)
05.03.02	Jim Shannon	Report on Cancer Services (199 words)
12.03.02	Jim Shannon	Ambulance Service (235 words)
22.04.02	Jim Shannon	Ballybeen Women's Group (113 words)

21.05.02 Jim Shannon Diabetes (182 words)

11.06.02 Jim Shannon Cultural Tourism and the Arts (363 words)

17.06.02 Bairbre de Brún Pregnancy/Childbirth (55 words)

17.06.02 Ian Adamson Pregnancy/Childbirth (38 words)

Dr Adamson used two of his speeches twice: on 09.11.98 and 09.03.99; and on 19.12.00 and 06.03.01.

The total number of words up to 17.06.02 is 3018.