

AGM Notice and link to register Delegates

Notice of the 2026 AGM has recently been sent to the Nominated Contact at each Scout Group. It contains details of the agenda, the motions, the financial statements and a link to register your Delegates. If you have not seen this yet, then you should contact the Company Secretary at cosec@scouts.ie right away to ensure you are not left out.

The attachments to the notice can be viewed at the links below.

[Constitution](#) [Document Pack](#) [Agenda](#) [Minutes of 2025 AGM](#) [Financials 2025](#)

As we approach the AGM it seems appropriate to reflect on the current situation and developments since the last AGM. This article attempts to summarise a number of the relevant matters. Any views expressed are the authors own, with apologies for any errors or omissions.

Financial Matters

The 2025 accounts show an inflow of €2.75 million from a settlement with the organisation's insurers re. any liabilities that may arise as a result of Historic Sexual Abuse cases. They show Legal Provisions of €11.44 million, resulting in a negative funding position of €8.17 million (compared to negative €10.08 million in 2024).

One financial model based on information now available, indicates that the organisation may have to increase the gap between expenditure and income to the tune of about €1 million per year for the next 5 years. It seems there is still a serious financial challenge but perhaps not as daunting as it appeared last year or the year before.

[Financial Statement and Directors Report 2025](#)

The Constitution

The agenda includes several motions to change specific aspects of the Constitution. These have resulted from the withdrawal of a single motion containing numerous changes which had been proposed for last year's AGM. Many of those proposed changes are this year presented as stand-alone motions so that Scout Groups can decide on how they should vote on each separately.

[Details of Motions and supporting rationale](#)

Organisation Structure

It has been announced that on the morning of the AGM (October 10th) and in the same venue, there will be a session on the current thinking/proposals re. the structures of the organisation. The Structural Review Committee was formed in November 2023 and organised a survey to collect views as well as several workshops to explore options. At the outset there was a commitment that the proposals would be put to the membership as a whole before any changes are implemented, so the meeting on October 10th is an important opportunity to hear all about it. In addition to an explanation of the current thinking, it is to be hoped that it will give us an insight into what was raised during consultation, what other issues/challenges were considered, how the current thinking lines up with and responds to those, what the proposed changes are and in what timeframe they may be implemented.

Terms of reference for the [Structural Review Committee](#)

Strategy & Planning

A Strategic Plan for the period 2026-2029 was recently launched following a period of consultation with the membership. It sets out a Vision for the three-year period, declares a set of core values to drive the organisation throughout that period, describes four main goals & eight strategic pillars to provide focus for planning and action as well as a basis for periodic review. It reads more like a statement of strategic intent than a plan but it declares that the strategy will be converted into detailed operational plans with a cyclical review process, this should lead to an alignment of planning across departments and functions as well as transparent reporting for effective management and oversight. It is to be hoped that we will receive regular updates on this process in the months ahead.

The Strategic Plan can be viewed [HERE](#) The press release can be viewed [HERE](#)

A plain text version suitable for ink-efficient printing can be found [HERE](#)

Charities Regulator

In January 2025, we were informed that the Charities Regulator had appointed inspectors to investigate the relationship between Gasóga na hÉireann / Scouting Ireland clg and a number of other related bodies. See a previous article on Scouting Matters [HERE](#)

In April (2026) the Charities Regulator published the inspectors report. The findings included that beneficial ownership of vested assets was not clear, and that three historic unincorporated associations were still in existence and this being “a complicating matter”.

In response to the report the Chief Executive of the Charities Regulator is quoted as saying “I urge the trustees of the charities concerned to take immediate steps to resolve all governance issues and the matters regarding the control and ownership of the charitable assets at question here. If we do not see clear signs of progress, the Charities Regulator has regulatory powers to intervene under the Charities Act 2009”. Extracts from the Chief Executives response and a link to a copy of the report are available on the Charities Regulators website [HERE](#)

A communication from the Board on this declared that “Scouting Ireland will continue to work with all stakeholders and agrees with the Regulator that action to resolve any governance and ownership issues should be a priority for the benefit of scouting on the island”. It is to be hoped that the issues will indeed be dealt with expeditiously. A copy of this communication can be viewed [HERE](#)

Responding to Conflict

It is understood that the procedures for dealing with conflict between and amongst adults have been under review for many months now but there has been a marked absence any updates on this.

In May (2026) we were informed of a settlement with an ex-Chief Scout who had taken legal action in relation to disciplinary action taken against them quite some time ago. The communication acknowledged there had been shortfalls in Scouting Ireland’s disciplinary framework and in the application of its disciplinary procedures, and it apologised for that. The communication can be viewed [HERE](#)

It is to be hoped that the review of the relevant procedures may serve to address those shortfalls and avoid recurrence. Perhaps the introduction of a more appropriate framework for dealing with conflict and complaints, as well as the removal of appointments and/or membership, may pave the way for additional steps towards achieving the aspiration set out in the Strategic Plan; to become “a thriving, inclusive movement where every volunteer feels safe and supported...”.

Volunteer Training

In July 2022, a review of the wood badge training scheme was kicked off with the formation of a team to review the Becoming a Scouter course, and in January 2023 we were circulated with a survey. Review of the training provided to volunteers is surely a good thing, but progress seems unaccountably slow, there appears to be no sign of an overall plan or timeframe for this and a notable absence of written updates to the membership. Goal 1 in the Strategy includes “Improve training completion time by 20% through digital innovation”, perhaps this will lead to a fresh approach to this project, and better visibility of plans and progress.

Developing the Youth Programme

In July (2026), a new project team, the Programme Development Team was announced, and an open call was issued for a [team lead](#) and [team members](#). The initiative has been named IGNITE and its purpose is “to evolve ONE programme to deliver high-quality, youth-centred programme frameworks and supports... ..to evolve to a cohesive, effective and inspiring programme that is in the hands of young people and that supports Scouters to support young people effectively throughout their journey in Scouting “. It is timely that this work is being launched now as it aligns with the Strategic Plan and has the potential to deliver on several aspects of it.

Planning, Reviewing & Communicating

The Strategic Plan document announces a structured process for more detailed planning and for reviewing and controlling those more detailed plans in a robust and regular manner. The Strategic Plan and the changes arising from the items outlined above will constitute a very large change management programme incorporating significant organisational, cultural and procedural change which will impact most, perhaps all of the departments and functions. This programme of change is clearly essential if Scouting Ireland is to retain its relevance and to achieve the goals and aspirations set out in the Strategic Plan. Such a programme will undoubtedly need significant management skills and experience and would no doubt require the involvement of individuals with relevant applied knowledge of such programmes.

Conclusion

It would seem that the current Board are actively pursuing a drive for improved governance and the management of the significant challenges that have existed in recent years in that regard.

In addition, it should be observed that many aspects of the operation of the organisation appear to be working well, volunteer training, national & international events, support for various youth programme activities, as well as conferences and other activities for volunteers, to name a few.

The following appear to be essential to future success ;

- Continued focus on the financial situation & resolving the issues raised by the regulator
- Agreement on & implementation of appropriate organisational structure changes

- Detailed planning & an effective review cycle to support the Strategic Plan
- Completion of the work to create a safe & supportive environment for volunteers
- Solid progress with the review of volunteer training & youth programme delivery

It seems like a lot of work has been done and there is still a lot more to do, but it can surely happen with an adequate number of trained staff and experienced volunteers of all ages working together in a collaborative, effective, and respectful manner.

Incidentally, based on the effort required to source the materials for this article, perhaps we should add a properly searchable website to the list of things to do?

A PDF version of this article can be found [HERE](#)