Briefing re. Financial Situation

On November 7th the Chief Executive Officer, the Chairperson of the Board, and the Chief Scout held a briefing session for County Commissioners and representative Group Leaders from all parts of the country in relation to the financial position of the organisation. Attendees heard that:

1. Scouting Ireland continues to grow and develop and remains operationally solvent.
2. It has commenced a financial resilience programme aimed at rebuilding cash reserves and meeting its obligation to survivors.
3. The success of this programme is essential and can only be fully achieved with the support of its members.

After the meeting the CEO circulated a copy of the presentation used at the briefing as well as a document setting out some of the questions being asked and the organisation's response to those.

A copy of the communication can be read HERE

The presentation can be found HERE

The Questions and Answers document can be viewed HERE

Article in the Currency

News of this briefing was picked up by the Currency, and an article by Tom Lyons (November 13th, 2026) spoke of this and reminded the reader that two particular Directors had raised " financial and governance concerns" and had been removed by the Board in 2024, and that in April 2026 a statuary investigation conducted by the Charities Regulator raised questions as to the clarity of ownership of Scout properties held in trust and directed Scouting Ireland to deal with that.

A copy of the recent article by The Currency can be read HERE

A previous article by this website re. the happenings in 2024 can be read HERE

A previous article by this website re. the Charity Regulator's report can be read HERE

A copy of the Regulators report can be found HERE

And you can read Scouting Ireland's statement following the report HERE

Article in The Times

The briefing was also covered in an article by Jack Power of the Irish Times (November 14th, 2026). In that article Jack makes a reference to a 2018 article by The Times and seems to imply that it had the effect of bringing these cases to light. In fact, the cases came to light as a result of a review that was commissioned by the then-board of Scouting Ireland, that review led to a number of recommendations for improvements in safeguarding practices which have since been implemented. As a result of that review, a number of old files were referred to the relevant statuary authorities (North and South). Work had been underway at Scouting Ireland to revise its corporate governance arrangements and that concluded at an EGM in October 2018 where the membership voted almost unanimously to amend the constitution and to elect an entirely new Board.

A copy of the recent article by The Times can be read HERE

More can be read about the happenings in 2018 and the aftermath in a previous article by this website HERE

Posting by a fellow-Scouter

The briefing meeting gave rise to observations and questions by members of Scouting Ireland and, inevitably, some of this appeared on social media. A fellow-Scouter named John Holland choose to respond to this, setting out his own lived experience of historic abuse and of governance at Scouting Ireland before responding to five specific matters (assertions, concerns and questions).

In summary these are:

1. Won't Scouting continue even if the company had to go into liquidation?
2. Does Scouting Ireland intend to sell off our Scout Halls?
3. Why are we dragging survivors through the Courts?
4. Why won't insurance cover all costs?
5. Why did the Board not… ?

John responds to each of those items from his own personal knowledge as an ex-Director of the Board, and so the post is very informative. In his conclusion, John acknowledges that this is a complex and emotive matter for all of us and he urges everyone to work together and support the Board and the CEO at this time.

John's post can be read HERE

In his post, John expresses the view that a national organisation is vital for the success of local Scouting. A previous post by this website addresses the same point, it is available HERE

Authors viewpoint

Articles on this website principally seek to provide access to information from a variety of sources in the one place, they tend to avoid the authors personal opinions. However, I feel I should add my personal viewpoint on this occasion. The following is based on my own observations and personal knowledge and does not purport to represent the views of any other person or group whatsoever.

In 2018 a number of Scouters stepped forward and enabled the election of a completely new Board at a time when the organisation was under considerable pressure to demonstrate a marked change of its approach to good governance.

The period 2018-2024 was a difficult time, with a continuing focus on the historic abuse cases as well as the significant impact of public health restrictions due to Covid which led to the closedown or virtual closedown of many Scout Groups and a slow recovery of normal operations thereafter.

Over the years since 2018 individual Directors have stepped down partly due to the constitutional provisions for some to retire each year and perhaps for prevailing personal reasons also. With the maximum period of service for a Director at 6 years and a number of Directors standing down at the end of that period, the Board since 2025 is comprised of people who were not Directors in the period 2018-2024.

This "page turn" appears to have brought with it a renewed energy and impetus. Staffing levels have been strengthened to ensure the provision of quality infrastructure, support and administration services by the staff at National Office, in the Provinces, and on our

campsites. Also many initiatives have been undertaken to ensure our governance arrangements meet all expected requirements and to improve supports for youth programme as well as adult volunteers and Scout Groups. Some of these initiatives are complete now and others are underway.

The current Directors also seem to be adopting a more open and inclusive approach. This is evident in much of their messaging and in their investment in listening to people's views and seeking to take them into account.

Implicit in John's recent posting is the point that blaming others for where we are today is not a viable or productive option, constructive collaboration is required to ensure the future of Scouting in Ireland. I agree, it is up to us all…

Yours in Scouting,

Maelíosa (Milly) DeBuitléar