Libraries NI

Business Plan

2012 – 2013

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1. Who we are

1.1 The Northern Ireland Library Authority (known as Libraries NI) was established in April 2009. Our primary duty, as set down in the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008, is to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service for persons living, working or studying in Northern Ireland. In doing so we are required to:

- secure that facilities are available for the borrowing of, or reference to library materials sufficient in number, range and quality to meet the general requirements of adults and children (whether by keeping adequate stocks, by arrangements with other bodies concerned with library services or by any other means); and
- have regard to the desirability of:
  - encouraging both adults and children to make full use of the library service
  - providing advice as to the use of the library service and making available such bibliographical and other information as may be required by persons using the service
  - promoting literacy and lifelong learning
  - maintaining a collection of library materials relevant to the cultural heritage of Northern Ireland
  - making library premises available for cultural and community activities
  - meeting any special requirements of adults and children by any appropriate means.

1.2 The Board of Libraries NI comprises a Chairperson and 18 Members, 11 of whom are councillors within the meaning of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972. The Board is appointed by the Minister of Culture, Arts and Leisure.

1.3 Our Vision

A flexible and responsive public library service which provides a dynamic focal point in the community and assists people to fulfil their potential.

1.4 Our Mission

To enrich and enhance the lives of individuals and communities through providing and promoting a range of high quality library and information services.

1.5 Our Values

- **Customers come first** – listening to our customers and responding to their needs for library services that support learning, information and leisure

- **Nurturing staff** – supporting our staff in the workplace so that they are fully equipped to provide the high quality services that users deserve and expect
- **Innovating and Improving** – striving for improvement in all that we do to encourage further and better use of library services and ensure that they meet changing needs
- **Decisiveness** - taking the decisions that need to be made in the best interests of the service and the ever changing needs of the public and wider society
- **Accountability** – demonstrating leadership, working to standards, explaining our decisions, reporting progress and delivering value for money.

1.6 Our Key Principles

- We will plan regionally and deliver services locally
- We will strive for equity of provision with targeted interventions to meet particular needs in local communities
- We will encourage and share best practice
- We will develop strategic partnerships to widen access and optimise the use of scarce resources
- We will engage with communities to ensure that the services being delivered are meeting local needs.

1.7 Our Key Themes

Our work is focused on 4 key themes, all of which are underpinned by the centrality of reading and reader development. The 4 key themes are:

- **Support for learning and learners** – libraries provide a learning network that runs parallel with formal education but also extends far beyond it. They complement and reinforce formal learning, but also provide an unthreatening environment where people can receive encouragement, advice and support to get back on the learning ladder
- **Access to information** – libraries have a critical role to play in helping to promote greater equality of access to, and capability in using, information thereby helping people to make choices and exercise their democratic rights as citizens
- **Cultural and creative development** – as a focal point in communities, libraries are ideally placed to offer a comprehensive range of events and activities designed to broaden intellectual and emotional experiences and enhance the constructive use of leisure
- **Heritage and digitisation** – libraries have a long tradition of collecting and preserving material which relates to our cultural heritage. Access to this cultural heritage, both local and national, enriches society through nurturing creativity, imagination, a sense of place and a sense of pride.

1.8 Our network

Our services are delivered through a network of 96 libraries and 28 mobile libraries. Libraries provide a wide range of services including:

- books and other material such as CDs, DVDs, audio books, newspapers, periodicals and magazines
- free downloadable e books and audio books
- online resources, many of which can also be accessed from home
- computers for use by the general public with free internet access for library members
- learning opportunities
- family history, heritage and local studies material
- access to information from a range of sources and organisations
- cultural and creative experiences
- storytimes, rhythm and rhyme sessions, class visits and other activities for children
- reading groups for children, teenagers and adults
- meeting and shared social space.

2. The Planning Context

2.1 Business planning for 2012/13 is taking place in the context of unprecedented economic pressures with reduced resources available to Libraries NI as well as to other organisations with which we co-operate and work in partnership. Realising the efficiencies required by the budget settlement while, at the same time, continuing to develop and deliver effective services will present significant challenges. It means that our plan must be evidence based i.e. informed by a sound understanding of our actual and potential customers and their needs and expectations as well as by knowledge of programmes and projects which have impacted, or will impact, positively on the lives of individuals and communities.

2.2 During the first 3 years of Libraries NI's existence a number of strategic reviews of provision were undertaken, involving widespread public consultation. These reviews were important in terms of ensuring a network of sustainable libraries and addressing the savings necessitated by the budget settlement. As a corollary of the publicity surrounding strategic reviews, the profile of the public library service has never been higher and a significant amount of information has been gathered, particularly in relation to the expectations and requirements that library users and the general public have of the services that we provide and should be providing.

Customers

2.3 Our customers have told us that:

- libraries are important at the present time when unemployment is increasing and many people cannot afford to buy books or have a personal computer with internet access
- libraries play a key role in supporting people who are unemployed and seeking work and who use the library and, in particular, the free access to the internet, to look for jobs and build their skills.

- they value the resources, support and encouragement available in libraries for learners of all ages, some of whom have had negative experiences of formal education
- older people, in particular, view libraries as places of social interaction
- libraries are community hubs and this is particularly important in rural areas where there is often a lack of other public buildings
- libraries and library staff make an important contribution to the development of early learning skills through, for example, their work with pre-school children and their parents or carers;
- the role of libraries in supporting and extending literacy skills through work with schools and school age children should not be underestimated
- the library is a recognised shared space - in some areas the only shared community facility - and that it contributes to community cohesion and social inclusion
- the library is an important and trusted source of information, including about services available from other organisations.

Staff

2.4 During public consultations, our users told us also that they value highly the knowledge, skills and support provided by our staff and we recognise that, despite all the changes that have taken place, staff have continued to provide a high quality service. It has been a difficult time, however, with high levels of uncertainty created by the potential and actual closure of libraries, reductions in opening hours and voluntary redundancies as well as the changes necessitated by the creation of a new organisation and harmonising and streamlining practices. The process of harmonisation will continue in 2012-13 and the introduction of E2 will bring further changes. We will seek to support our staff by developing and improving our internal communications systems and by providing them with training and development to assist them to meet the challenges that are ahead. We will also continue to consult with the recognised trades unions on a regular basis in relation to staffing matters.

2.5 In developing this Business Plan, consideration has been given also to the impact on libraries and library use of the political, economic, social and technological environment. Opportunities exist, given the reach and breadth of libraries, to work creatively and innovatively, including in partnership with other organisations in the statutory, voluntary and community sectors, to meet the needs of citizens and address key government priorities.

2.6 Political environment

The Programme for Government identifies the following 5 key strategic, interconnected and inter-dependent priorities:

- Growing a Sustainable Economy and Investing in the Future
- Creating Opportunities, Tackling Disadvantage and Improving Health and Well-Being
- Protecting Our People, the Environment and Creating Safer Communities
- Building a Strong and Shared Community
- Delivering High Quality and Efficient Public Services.

Through our network of libraries and the range of services and programmes provided, Libraries NI is well-placed to contribute to the delivery of these priorities. We will seek to develop partnerships with other statutory, community and voluntary organisations to optimise the use of scarce resources and address needs in a holistic manner.

2.7 Economic Environment

Libraries NI will play its role in the challenging fiscal environment by continuing to provide people with opportunities for lifelong learning, helping them to access information, supporting creative and cultural development, and providing programmes that contribute to health and well-being and the constructive use of leisure time. In doing so, we will target groups who can benefit most from our services.

2.8 Social Change

In an increasingly diverse and multi-cultural society the promotion of social inclusion and a shared and better future for all citizens remains a high priority. Public libraries are widely recognised as welcoming, accessible, trusted and shared spaces, embedded in communities and used by people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds to pursue leisure and learning and to have access to high quality information resources. Libraries NI will continue to ensure that its services are delivered in welcoming and accessible environments and that they are available to all sections of the community. Opportunities will be provided for people to explore their own and other cultures and cultural heritage and through the promotion of our heritage resources, we will contribute to the realisation of the Commemorations Strategy.

2.9 Technological Development

Over the last few years the pace and scale of technological change has been exponential and will continue to be so into the future. Digital technologies and the growth of Web 2.0, including social networking, blogs and wikis now play a central role in the lives of citizens in the 21st century, profoundly affecting how we live and how society functions. Technology offers significant potential for the development of new approaches to the delivery of effective and efficient library services and through the opportunity provided by the need to replace our electronic library systems, we will seek to enhance the services available to the general public. Digital inclusion is essential for the social, economic and educational advantages of life in the modern world and we will continue to provide free access for library users to the internet and the wealth of resources available through it. In combination with providing digital access, we will assist people to develop the skills necessary to access, evaluate and use appropriate information which is critical to closing the digital divide.

2.10 Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure Objectives

The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) is the sponsoring body for the work of Libraries NI. In support of its vision of “a confident, creative, informed and vibrant community”, DCAL has established a number of objectives:

- enable a broad and diverse range of the Northern Ireland population to participate in culture, arts and leisure activities

- enhance the contribution to the culture, arts and leisure sectors in growing and rebalancing the economy
- enhance the contribution of the culture, arts and leisure sectors in relation to tourism in Northern Ireland
- facilitate organised learning visits and experiences through our culture, arts and leisure infrastructure
- ensure that the culture, arts and leisure sectors in Northern Ireland contribute to a shared and better future based on equality, diversity and interdependence
- protect and enhance the quality of the environment through interventions in the culture, arts and leisure sectors
- enable as many people as possible to improve their quality of life and engender healthy lifestyles through regular participation in sport and leisure activities.

3. Corporate Objectives

3.1 The corporate objectives of Libraries NI during this planning period are to:

- promote and enhance understanding of the role and value of the public library service
- improve the delivery of public library services
- increase participation in public library services
- ensure effective corporate governance and adherence to statutory requirements.

4. The Planning Processes

4.1 Effective planning is vital in ensuring that the needs of service users are met and that the organisation continues to improve. The performance management framework in Libraries NI consists of:

- the Corporate Plan which sets out high level objectives linked to the Programme for Government and DCAL strategies for library services
- the Business Plan which sets out annually the actions we need to be take and the targets that we need to achieve in order to fulfil the commitments in the Corporate Plan
- Service Plans which translate the Business Plan into actions and targets to be taken forward by various teams within the organisation; and
- the Staff Appraisal process which includes the setting of personalised targets and goals for individual members of staff to enable them to fulfil their respective roles in meeting the actions and targets set out in the Service Plans.

5. Financing our Services

5.1 The ability to deliver our services depends on the acquisition and distribution of adequate financial resources. The plans in this document are based on the budget allocations from DCAL for 2012/13, namely:

	£000's
Resource	30,261
Capital	1,966

5.2 The Resource allocation means that cash savings of £1,294k must be achieved compared to the 2011/12 base allocation. Savings Delivery Plans were put in place in 2011/12 to achieve the required savings, mainly through a combination of reduced premises costs, reduced staffing costs and adjustments to the stock budget.

5.3 We plan to spend the resource budget as follows:-

	£000's
Staff	17,958
Stock	3,060
Premises	4,426
Maintenance	750
PFI	3,830
Vehicles	291
Other	1,756

Sub-total	32,071
Income	(1,810)

Total	**30,261**
	======

5.4 The capital allocation means that we can plan to begin work on one major capital project, although further clarity on funding for its completion in 2013/14 will be required before works can be commenced. In addition we plan to replace 4 mobile library vehicles and carry out refurbishments at approximately 6 libraries.

5.5 We plan to spend the capital budget as follows:-

	£000's
Major works	500
Vehicles	380
Minor works	1,086

Total	1,966

6. Monitoring Progress

6.1 The Business Plan will be monitored by the Senior Management Team and progress towards achieving the objectives and targets will be reported to the Board. In order for progress to be easily tracked the traffic light system will be used to indicate achievements against targets.

🟢	On track for achievement / Substantially achieved / Achieved
🟠	Likely to be achieved with some delay
🔴	Not likely to be achieved / Not achieved

7. Objectives and Targets

7.1 The following section sets out the objectives, key activities and targets for 2012 -13.

7.2 In developing this Plan we have been mindful of the universal nature of the public library service but also of the need to target services at specific groups where the impact might be greatest i.e.

- children and young people
- parents
- retired and older people
- job seekers and people who are unemployed
- people who are studying
- people who are disadvantaged.

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
1. Promote and enhance understanding of the role and value of the public library service	1.1	Increased awareness of the range of available services among actual and potential customers	Develop and implement Marketing Service Plan Develop and implement brand strategy taking account of DCAL Communications Strategy Improve online customer support Develop and implement promotional strategies for target groups Develop on-going relationships with stakeholders and media	Marketing Service Plan in place by April 2012 Brand Strategy and action plan in place by October 2012 Implement new arrangements for customer support by June 2012 Strategies in place by August 2012 Agree baseline targets for media coverage by July 2012	Director of Library Services
	1.2	Partnerships with statutory, voluntary and community organisations to increase participation	Develop strategic partnerships with: • statutory and voluntary organisations in the health sector to contribute to the health and well-being agenda • statutory and community organisations with a remit for rural matters to develop alternative approaches to service provision • regional colleges to support the learning agenda • organisations working with target groups to increase participation Continue strategic partnership with Volunteer Now	Establish 8 formal strategic partnerships by March 2013 Implement 2012/13 Volunteer Now / Libraries NI Action Plan	Senior Management Team

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
2. Improve the delivery of the public library service	2.1	Safe, attractive and welcoming library environments	Implement capital and minor works programme Implement planned maintenance programme	Programmes implemented in accordance with agreed timetable and budget Post Project Evaluations undertaken in accordance with agreed timetable Outline Business Case for Northern Ireland Regional Library substantially complete by March 2013 with submission to DCAL by September 2013	Director of Business Support
			Undertake service-related preparatory work for future capital projects Agree and implement standards for the internal and external appearance of libraries	Consultations undertaken in accordance with agreed timetable Service Strategies developed for Northern Ireland Regional Library by September 2012 Standards agreed by December 2012	Director of Library Services
	2.2	Electronic library systems and processes support the delivery of 21st century services	Monitor and report on ELFNI service standards	Adherence to agreed standards until E2 contract is in place	Director of Business Support
			Implement E2 Project Plan	Preferred bidder nominated by Autumn 2012 Full Business Case approved by February 2013 E2 Contract signed March 2013	

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
			Implement programme of training and development to prepare staff for implementation of E2	Relevant change management and culture change programmes implemented by March 2013	Organisational Development Manager
			Review Digital Strategy to maximise the benefits of E2	Revised Digital Strategy in place by March 2013	Director of Library Services
	2.3	Management Information supports effective planning, monitoring and reporting	Implement review of statistical information to ensure completeness, accuracy and usefulness Develop agreed suite of statistics that complies with the Code of Practice on Official Statistics	Review complete by December 2012 Suite of statistics agreed by July 2012 First submission by March 2013	Director of Business Support / Organisational Development Manager
	2.4	Effective and efficient services in rural communities	Develop alternative approaches to service provision in rural areas working in partnership, where appropriate Develop Service Strategy for mobile library provision Address operational and harmonisation issues associated with provision of mobile library services Implement Strategic Review Stage 2 Action Plan Develop approaches to service provision in non-library venues	Alternative models developed and action plans in place by March 2013 Consultation undertaken in autumn 2012; Service Strategy in place by March 2013 Commission new vehicles by June 2012; Structure agreed by September 2012 Stage 2 Action Plan implemented in accordance with agreed timetable Guidelines produced for core activities in non-library venues by December 2012	Director of Library Services

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
	2.5	Patterns of opening hours meets customer needs	Consult with users to establish preferred patterns of opening hours	Revised opening hours implemented with effect from June 2012	Director of Library Services
	2.6	Workforce strategy supports service delivery	Analyse staffing needs following service reviews and impact of legislation changes Implement changes resulting from opening hours review Finalise organisational structure Roll out training on managing attendance Provide regular reports for management to assist with the management of attendance	Tranche 4 voluntary redundancy programme implemented by 31 May 2012 Revised working patterns in place by 1 June 2012 Fit for purpose organisational structure in place to facilitate exit from RPA/Vacancy Control by December 2012 On-going consultation and negotiation with trades unions through Joint Negotiating Committee Average annual days sickness absence per full time employee reduced to 10 days	Director of Business Support
	2.7	Staff have the knowledge and skills to deliver high quality services	Implement Staff Appraisal process Implement agreed Staff Training and Development Plan to include: • Frontline training • Customer service	Staff Appraisal process completed by June 2012 Staff Training and Development Plan delivered within budget	Organisational Development Manager

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
			• E2 Culture Change • Teambuilding • Delivery of core programmes and activities • Service promotion • Procurement • Use of social media • Core activities • DCAL Learning Strategy / Quality Indicators Implement lessons learned from IIP pre-assessment	Processes to evaluate impact of training in place for each programme Action Plan in place by June 2012	
	2.8	Improved staff morale and motivation	Staff Information and Awareness Days Develop and implement Action Plan to address issues arising from Staff Survey	Programme implemented by December 2012 Action Plan in place by September 2012	Chief Executive / Organisational Development Manager
	2.9	Effective internal communication	Develop and implement Internal Communications Strategy to include: • Staff Web • Meetings strategy • Action Plan to improve communication between Directorates	Internal Communications Strategy in place to include: • Insight update (monthly) • Insight Newsletter(quarterly) • CE Blog • Review of Staff Web by December 2012)	Senior Management Team / Head of Strategic Marketing and Communications
	2.10	Customers are satisfied with service provision	Participate in Continuous Household Survey Use Customer Feedback to improve service delivery	Maintain customer satisfaction levels at 2010/11 levels Quarterly analysis of customer feedback	Organisational Development Manager

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
			Undertake Customer survey	Customer survey completed and analysed by March 2013	
	2.11	Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries	Contribute to DCAL review of Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries	Review to be initiated by DCAL in 2012/13	Senior Management Team
3. Increase participation in the public library service	3.1	Maintain level of use at the baseline established in the year when reduced opening hours are implemented (2012/13) as measured by • Issues • Active Members • PAT use • Use of online resources • Visits • Number of programmes • Number of participants in programmes	Fit for purpose stock For each of the 6 target groups: • ensure appropriate stock • deliver relevant services and activities • develop partnerships • implement promotional campaigns Programmes and activities to engage and support children and young people	Achieve £1.70 spend per capita on stock Detailed stock policies developed by September 2012 and action plan in place for implementation Implement stock performance management system by December 2012 Target groups reflected in Service and Area Plans 70% of libraries will deliver regular Rhythm and Rhyme sessions for pre-school children (at least 1 session per month) 70% of libraries will deliver a quality assured class visits programme for primary age children	Director of Library Services

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
				Action Plan to support Accelerated Reading Scheme developed by April 2012 with agreed timetable for implementation	
			Programmes and activities to support learning	70% of libraries will deliver one to one assistance and / or organised events to support digital inclusion Implement the Six Book Challenge to support Essential Skills Implement activities to support Liofa 2015	
			Programmes and activities to enhance access to information	A minimum of 50 events will be held to provide customers with access to information relevant to their needs with a focus on health, business, employability and surviving and thriving in a time of austerity Health in Mind Year 3 Action Plan implemented	
			Programmes and activities to support and encourage interest in our heritage	A minimum of 50 events will be held to promote heritage resources, including those relevant to the Decade of Commemorations	
			Programmes and activities to support and encourage reading	Implement actions arising from Frontline training	

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
				Implement a minimum of 20 stock promotions during 2012/13, including “Big Reads”	
			Provide access to cultural and creative experiences	A minimum of 50 cultural events and activities will be held Develop programme of activities to support Derry City of Culture	
			Enhance access to electronic resources	Increase use of electronic resources by 70%	
4. Ensure effective governance and adherence to statutory requirements	4.1	Effective planning, monitoring and reporting arrangements	Agree Corporate and Business Plans Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in place Quarterly Assurance Statements submitted to DCAL in accordance with agreed timetable	Quarterly reports to Board on progress in relation to targets Quarterly report to Board on Key Performance Indicators Accountability meetings with DCAL in line with agreed timetable (3 per year)	Chief Executive
	4.2	Annual Report and Accounts published	Prepare and submit Annual Report and Accounts in line with Accounts Directive	Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2011/12 completed by 31 May 2012 Final Annual Report and Accounts 2011/12 certified by NIAO by 31 October 2012 With the exception of Stock Assets, achieve clean audit certificate	Director of Business Support

Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
	4.3	Financial targets met	Implement Savings Delivery Plans Issue monthly monitoring reports of spend against budget Payment of suppliers within agreed timescales	Half yearly reports produced to track implementation of Savings Delivery Plans At year end net spend is within budget for both capital and resource funds 100% of invoices paid within 30 days 90% of invoices paid within 10 working days	Director of Business Support
	4.4	Best practice approaches to risk management and audit in place	Risk registers in place at corporate, business and project level	Risk registers reviewed quarterly with regular reports to Board / relevant Committee	Senior Management Team
			Implement Internal Audit Strategy and Plan	Internal Audit Strategy and Plan agreed by May 2012 90% of planned internal audits completed by 31 March 2013	Head of Internal Audit
			Implement agreed Internal Audit recommendations	All Priority 1 Internal Audit recommendations addressed within 4 months of agreed implementation date	Senior Management Team
	4.5	Recommendations from Report to those Charged with Governance are addressed	Implement Stock Assets Project	Improved storage of valuable assets in Belfast Central Library in place by July 2012 Accounting policy agreed and implemented by September 2012	Director of Libraries

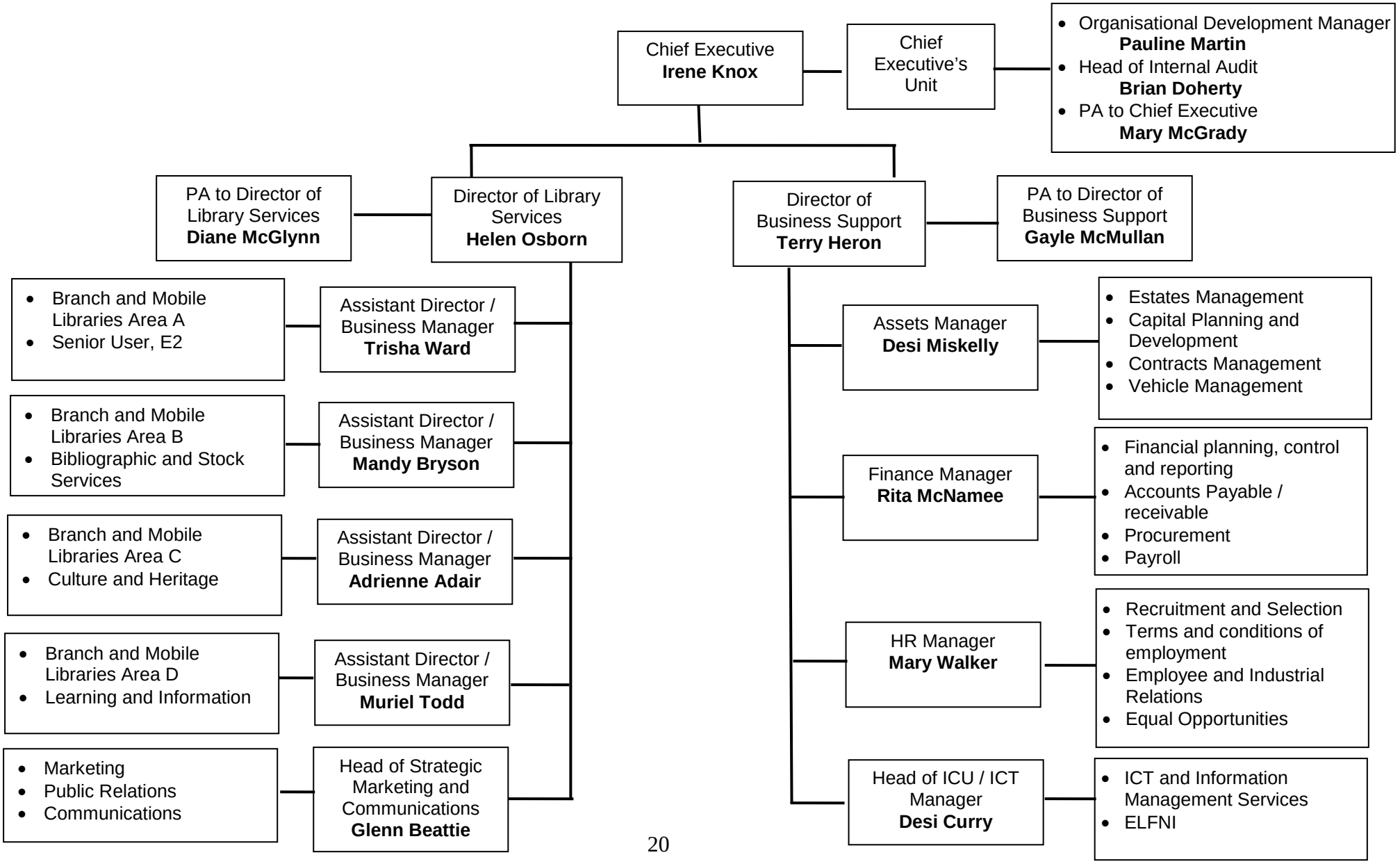
Corporate Objective	Ref	Description	Key Activities	Targets	Lead Responsibility
	4.6	Information security arrangements are in line with best practice	Roll out Data Protection training (IT programme)	All staff complete training by 31 March 2013	Organisational Development Manager
			Procure Information Security Consultants to advise on security arrangements for E2 project Develop and implement Action Plan	Report with recommendations received by June 2012 Action Plan in place by September 2012	Director of Business Support
	4.7	Equality and Disability arrangements are in line with best practice	Implement Equality Action Plan Implement Disability Action Plan	Conduct annual review by 30 September 2012 Deliver programme of awareness training for all staff and focused training for specific staff by March 2013 Publish annual progress report by 31 August 2012	Director of Business Support

Appendix 1

Libraries NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Board Members

Mr Nigel Macartney	Chairperson
Councillor Hubert Nicholl	Vice Chairperson
Councillor Anne Brolly	
Mr Pat Carvill	
Councillor Charlie Casey	
Councillor Sam Cole	
Mr Roger Dixon	
Councillor Allan Ewart	
Councillor Carla Lockhart	
Ms Angela Matthews	
Mr Alastair McDowell	
Councillor John O'Kane	
Councillor Evelyne Robinson	
Ms Helen Roulston	
Councillor Jim Rodgers	
Councillor Seamus Shields	
Councillor Marion Smith	
Ms Jane Williams	

Appendix 2

Libraries NI
Organisational Chart