LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

10 February 2011

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on Thursday 10 February 2011 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT

Dr David Elliott
Alderman Hubert Nicholl
Councillor Mrs Anne Brolly
Mr Pat Carvill
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Sam Cole
Mr Roger Dixon
Councillor Allan Ewart
Councillor Miss Carla Lockhart
Ms Angela Matthews
Councillor Cathal Mullaghan
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Jim Rodgers
Ms Helen Roulston
Councillor Seamus Shields
Ms Jane Williams

Chairperson
Vice Chairperson

APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Councillor Mrs Roberta Dunlop
Mr Nigel Macartney
Councillor Mrs Evelyne Robinson

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive
Director of Planning & Performance
Director of Service Delivery
Director of Business Support
Web Officer
Deputy Permanent Secretary, DCAL

Ms Irene Knox
Mrs Anne Connolly
Ms Helen Osborn
Mr Terry Heron
Mr Joe Mullan
Mr Edgar Jardine

1. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

1.1 The Chairperson reminded Members and Officers of the need to declare any actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest associated with any item on the agenda either now or at the relevant
stage during the meeting. The Chairperson declared a potential conflict of interest relating to the ElIINI 2 Project and the Belfast Central Library Project and indicated that he would withdraw at relevant stages during the meeting.

2. **CHAIRPERSON’S BUSINESS**

   **Welcome**

   2.1 The Chairman welcomed Mr Edgar Jardine, Deputy Permanent Secretary, DCAL to the meeting.

   **Visit to Dundonald Library by the Duchess of Cornwall on 4 February 2011**

   2.2 The Chairperson and Members congratulated the Chief Executive and staff on the arrangements for the very successful visit by the Duchess of Cornwall to Dundonald Library on 4 February 2011 to celebrate National Storytelling Week and the partnership with the National Literacy Trust and Booktrust.

   **Meeting with DCAL Minister – 24 January 2011**

   2.3 The Chairperson reported that the Chief Executive, Director of Business Support and he had met with the Minister to discuss the draft budget. They had made the Minister aware, in particular, about the implications of the proposed budget for the stock fund in 2013/14 and concerns regarding the lack of funding for Essential Maintenance in 2011/12. Discussions had also focused on the capital programme and in particular, Belfast Central Library.

   Mr Jardine informed the Board that, because of the level of cuts in the capital budget, a zero-based approach had been taken by the Department in relation to proposed capital projects with priority being given to contractual commitments. He added that sound arguments had been made about lack of funding for essential maintenance and the stock fund and that these matters had been discussed by the Departmental Board. He expressed regret that funding was not available for projects such as Belfast Central but indicated that the Departmental Board would review the strategic priorities for capital funding if additional funding became available.

   In response to a question regarding the availability of funding for redundancies, Mr Jardine indicated that bids were being made to the Department of Finance and Personnel for Invest to Save funding. Following discussion it was agreed that a bid should be submitted to DCAL for funding under the Invest to Save initiative to support redundancies.

   **Media Training**

   2.4 The Chairperson referred to the media training which had been organised for a number of Members and officers. The Vice-
Chairperson, Alderman Hubert Nicholl, informed the Board that he had attended the training course and had found it very interesting and a great learning experience.

**Stage 2 Public Consultation**

2.5 Members were reminded that public consultation meetings had commenced regarding Stage 2 of the strategic review into library provision. Members were informed that the first meeting had taken place in Antrim Library on 9 February in relation to Greystones Library with approximately 60 people in attendance. It was noted that some of the groups campaigning to keep their local libraries open were using social networking media as a means of promoting their campaigns.

In response to a question from Ms Roulston on the publication of statistics regarding use of libraries, the Director of Service Delivery indicated that a spreadsheet with usage figures for all libraries in Stage 2 was available on the website.

3. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS**

3.1 **Assembly Questions 3 December 2010 – 17 January 2011**

Members noted the Minister’s response to Assembly Questions during the period 3 December 2010 to 17 January 2011.

3.2 **Meeting with DCAL Minister on 24 January 2011**

The Chief Executive reported that, as previously discussed under Chairperson’s Business, she had found the meeting with the Minister to be very helpful. Key issues discussed included the stock budget, funding for essential maintenance and capital projects.

3.3 **Dates for Diaries**

The Chief Executive drew attention to the circulated list of events occurring over the next month. The Chief Executive informed Members that visits to Killyleagh and Fintona Libraries had been arranged and that dates for the official opening of Dungiven Library and the Heritage Gallery in Downpatrick Library had also been confirmed. She added that a celebration of the completion of the stonework in Belfast Central Library was forthcoming and a preview of Carrickfergus Library would also be organized.

The Chief Executive asked Members to note that the next meeting of the Services Committee would be held in the Centre for Migration Studies on Tuesday 15 March 2011. All Board Members were welcome to attend the meeting to see the Centre as well as visit Fintona Library afterwards. A visit could also be arranged to Omagh Library if required.

3.4 **Tabled Correspondence**

Members noted the tabled letter from the Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee dated 4 February 2011 which included a copy of the
Committee’s response to DCAL regarding the Budget 2011-15 spending and Savings Proposals.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2010 (LNI 01.02.11)

4.1 On a proposal by Ms H Roulston, seconded by Mr R Dixon, the minutes of the meeting held on 9 December 2010 were adopted.

5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2010 (LNI 02.02.11)

5.1 Members noted the document which had been circulated detailing actions taken as a result of discussions at, and decisions of, the Board at the previous meeting.

Item 3.2: Accountability Meeting

5.2 Members noted the minutes of the Accountability Meeting held on 27 October 2010 which were included with the papers for the Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 19 January 2011. A further Accountability Meeting was held on 28 January 2011.

Item 5.6: Vandalism

5.3 In response to a question from Mr McDowell regarding the response by the PSNI to the vandalism at Ballymena, the Director of Planning and Performance agreed to circulate the relevant correspondence.

Item 6.4: Stage 2 Strategic Review

5.4 The list of dates, times and venues for the public meetings regarding Stage 2 of the Strategic Review into library provision was noted.

The Chief Executive informed Members that the Chairperson, Chief Executive and Director of Service Delivery would brief the Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee on the proposals on 17 February 2011.

Item 7.2: Capital Report

5.5 Members noted that funding has been provided in the draft budget for 2011/12 to procure the bodywork for the mobile libraries.

Item 7.5: Finance Report: Capital

5.6 Members noted that the purchase of the site for the new Lisnaskea library has been completed but that funding was unavailable in the draft budget to progress the new build.

In response to a question from Councillor Shields, the Chief Executive indicated that a prioritised list of capital projects would be brought to a future meeting of the Business Support Committee for consideration. Councillor Shields expressed the view that the proposed new library in
Lisnaskea should be given serious consideration in the event that additional funding was made available since there had already been substantial expenditure in relation to the purchase of the site.

Item 7.6: Procurement Report

5.7 It was noted that this matter was considered by the Business Support Committee and recommendations were included in the minutes of their meeting held on 26 January 2011.

Item 9: Gifts and Hospitality: Guidance for Board Members

5.8 Members were reminded that they had been provided, by email, with a copy of the guidance and the relevant register which requires to be completed and submitted quarterly, with the first one covering the period 1 January 2011 – 31 March 2011 inclusive.

Item 10: Management of Conflicts of Interest

5.9. The Chairperson withdrew from the meeting. The Vice-Chairperson, Alderman H Nicholl, assumed the Chair.

5.9.1 On a proposal by Councillor C Mullaghan, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, Members agreed to go into Committee.

5.9.2 On a proposal by Councillor C Mullaghan, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, Members agreed to come out of Committee.

5.9.3 The Chairperson returned to the meeting and resumed the Chair.

5.9.4 The Vice-Chairperson reported that, while in Committee the Board had:
- considered in detail a letter from the DCAL Permanent Secretary and agreed to proceed as recommended by the Department
- noted the discussions at the Audit and Risk Committee in relation to the Chairperson’s Register of Gifts and Hospitality
- agreed to the establishment of a Committee, comprising the Vice Chairperson of the Board, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Services Committee, the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of Business Support Committee and Mr Roger Dixon with delegated authority to oversee the ELFNI replacement project, subject to all relevant papers being available to other Board Members (with the exception of the Chairperson of the Board).

Item 12: Staffing Matter

5.10 Members noted that DCAL had approved the proposal that a post at senior management level should be suppressed as a result of the retirement of the Director of Planning and Performance.
6. **MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2011**

6.1 Ms J Williams, Vice-Chairperson of the Services Committee presented the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2011 for approval and drew Members' attention to the undernoted items:

**Item 6: Mobile Libraries**

6.2 Members noted that the Director of Service Delivery had given a presentation on the Mobile Library Service and that Members had an opportunity to view a Mobile Library prior to the meeting. Members noted the key issues to be addressed in Stage 3 of the Strategic Review (Mobiles)

**Item 7: Revised Byelaws**

6.3 It was noted that the current Byelaws had been amended to take account of their operation over the last 18 months. Members noted that approval must be obtained from DCAL to implement the revised Byelaws and that for one month prior to submitting the Byelaws to DCAL for approval they would be available for inspection at the offices of the Chief Executive and on the Libraries NI website.

**Item 8: Strategic Review Stage 2 Update**

6.4 Members were reminded of the proposed forthcoming visits to Killyleagh and Fintona Libraries.

**Item 9: Community Information Policy**

6.5 Members noted the harmonised approach to providing information about local services and events in libraries.

6.6 On a proposal by Councillor A Ewart, seconded by Councillor S Cole, Members agreed to adopt the minutes of the Services Committee meeting held on 18 January 2011.

7. **MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 JANUARY 2011**

7.1 Mr A McDowell, Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 19 January 2011 for approval and drew attention to the following items:

**Item 3.5: Rare Books Collection**

7.2 Members noted the recommendation that the Services Committee undertake an urgent review of the risks associated with the Rare Books Collection in Belfast Central Library and a strategy be developed in relation to their security and storage given that the Belfast Central Library Project was now on hold.
Item 4.6: Internal Audit External Quality Review
7.3 It was noted that Members of the Audit and Risk Committee would prefer to have an external accountancy body carry out this review but due to funding difficulties they realised that this may not be possible. It was hoped that the Terms of Reference for this review would be available for review at the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting.

Item 7: Internal Audit Activity Report (September 2010 – January 2011)
7.4 Members noted that 12 internal audits Reports had been undertaken during the above period and that all had received a satisfactory assurance rating.

Item 8: Outstanding Recommendations
7.5 The Outstanding Recommendations Schedule showing progress to date on the implementation of recommendations was noted.

Item 9: Quarterly Assurance Statements
7.6 Members noted the Quarterly Assurance Statements and the letter from the Permanent Secretary, DCAL relating to this matter.

Item 11: Internal Audit Plan Update
7.7 It was noted that the Audit of Accounts Payable/Receivable had been deferred but would receive priority in the new financial year.

Item 12: Risk Management Report and Review
7.8 Members noted the suggested additions to the Corporate Risk Register.

Item 13: Directorate Risk Register
7.9 Members noted the presentation by the Director of Business Support and that further presentations on risk management would be brought to the Committee by the other Directors.

Item 15: Review of Audit and Risk Committee Terms of Reference
7.10 Members noted the two changes which had been made to this document.

Item 16: Chairperson’s Gifts and Hospitality Register
7.11 This matter was discussed under item 5.9 above.

7.12 Self-Assessment Checklist
It was noted that following the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee, Members of the Committee had met to complete the self assessment questionnaire received from the National Audit Office. Ms Roulston reported that Ms Judith Andrews, the co-opted member of the Audit and Risk Committee had expressed a wish to attend a Board meeting and a meeting of the Business Support Committee as part of her induction programme. The Chief Executive indicated that
she had been in contact with Ms Andrews who had been invited to attend the next meeting of the Board as well as the next meeting of the Business Support Committee. Ms Andrews had also been given access to the Board Members' extranet site.

7.13 On a proposal by Ms H Roulston, seconded by Councillor J Rodgers, Members agreed to adopt the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 19 January 2011.

8. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2011 (LNI 05.02.11)

8.1 Councillor C Mullaghan, Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2011 for approval and drew attention to the following items:

Item 4: Budget 2010

8.2 Members noted that a detailed presentation had been given by the Director of Business Support on the draft budget, the Savings Delivery Plans and the Draft Response. The Draft Response had been amended to take account of comments from Members and would be considered as the next item on the Board Agenda.

Item 7: Financial Reports

8.3 Members noted the projected underspend of £292K and that plans had been approved to ensure that the financial target was met. It was also noted that the target spend on capital of £5.5 million was achievable providing that there were no unforeseen circumstances.

Item 8: Annual Report and Accounts

8.4 The Director of Business Support reported that the final Accounts should be received from the Northern Ireland Audit Office by the end of February and, if so, would be brought to the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting on 23 March and to the Business Support Committee on 30 March. In order to allow the Chairperson and Chief Executive to sign the Accounts by the end of March he suggested that all Board Members be invited to attend the Business Support Committee meeting on 30 March.

The Chairperson enquired if all the outstanding issues had been resolved in order that the Accounts would be available in line with this proposed timescale. The Director of Business Support responded that some issues still needed to be resolved but that it was hoped that the timetable would be met. He added that any changes to the timetable would be notified to Members.

The Director of Business Support drew attention to the 3 areas where it appeared there might be a Limitation of Scope qualification, namely: pension liability comparatives, VAT Debtors and Valuable Books
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Collection. It was noted that the first 2 Limitation of Scope issues would apply in this year only since they related to comparative information from 2008/09 which the Education and Library Boards were unable to provide. The qualification concerning the Valuable Books Collection would continue into future years until the issue is resolved. He informed Members that a project was being established to address this issue.

Item 10: Impact of Bad Weather

8.5 Members asked that their thanks be recorded to staff who had worked hard to keep libraries open during the severe cold weather.

Item 11: Procurement Report

8.6 Members noted the approval for tenders in respect of the Ballynahinch Library refurbishment, Newry Library refurbishment and the appointment of consultants to assist with the preparation for the Outline Business Case for the replacement ElfNI project. Members also noted the report on Single Tender Actions under £500.

Item 12: Draft Procedures for Tenders

8.7 Members approved the recommendation that the same levels of delegation should apply to the Chief Executive as were contained in the Financial Memorandum with a report brought to each Committee Meeting. All tenders over this limit would be approved by the full Committee where timing allowed or by a sub-group of the Committee, if urgent.

8.9 On a proposal by Alderman H Nicholl, seconded by Ms A Matthews, Members agreed to adopt the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 26 January 2011.

9. BUDGET 2010: DRAFT RESPONSE (LNI 06.02.11)

9.1.1 The Chief Executive reported that the draft response, which had previously been considered in detail at the Business Support Committee on 26 January 2011, had been amended to take account of suggestions made by Board Members at that meeting and an additional appendix had been added showing a sample of responses received from library users.

9.2 Members noted that, to date, approximately 1,600 postcards had been received from library users regarding the draft Budget 2010 and that a significant number of on-line comments had also been received. The comments would be forwarded to DCAL.

9.4 Following discussion, on a proposal by Mr Carvill, seconded by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, it was agreed to adopt the draft response, subject to inclusion of reference to the need for funding for
redundancies and the important role played by libraries in addressing social deprivation.

10. **REVISED STANDING ORDERS**  

10.1 The Chief Executive informed the Board that, at the suggestion of DCAL, one change had been made to the proposed revised Standing Orders since the last meeting, namely:

   Item 14.1: the phrase "by the Chairperson" be removed

10.2 Subject to the above amendment, on the proposal of Alderman H Nicholl, seconded by Councillor A Ewart, Members agreed the revised Standing Orders which would take effect immediately.

11. **PROPOSALS FOR FEES AND CHARGES 2011/12**  

11.1 The Chief Executive informed Members that fees and charges were reviewed annually and it was proposed to amend the overdue fee from 9p per day to 10p per day with a maximum overdue charge per book of £5.00.

11.2 In response to questions from Members, the Director of Service Delivery explained that:
   • services are withdrawn from users who do not return items that they have borrowed
   • fines could be waived in exceptional circumstances in accordance with strict guidelines.

11.3 On a proposal by Councillor A Ewart, seconded by Ms Helen Roulston, Members agreed to approve the amendment to the overdue fee from 9p per day to 10p per day up to a maximum overdue charge per book of £5.00.

12. **PRESENTATION ON THE USE OF THE EXTRANET**

12.1 The Chief Executive reminded Members that, at a previous Board Meeting, it had been agreed that consideration would be given to sending hard copies of minutes of meetings only to Members for the Board Meeting together with any papers relating specifically to the Board meeting agenda which had not previously been considered by a Committee. Each Committee would receive hard copies of their papers and those Members not on the Committee would be able to view the papers via the extranet.

12.2 The Chief Executive introduced Mr Joe Mullan, Web Officer, who made a presentation to Members on use of the extranet site. In
response to a question regarding the purchase of laptops for Members, the Chairperson explained that, given current budget projections, it would be difficult to justify such a purchase.

12.3 Members agreed to operate the new arrangements with effect from the next meeting of the Board and to keep the arrangements under review.

13. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

13.1 The Chairperson informed Members that as the Director of Planning and Performance, Mrs A Connolly was due to retire at the end of March that this would be her last Board meeting. On behalf of Members he wished Mrs Connolly a long, healthy and happy retirement and thanked her for her contribution to the public library service, both in the North Eastern Education and Library Board and latterly in Libraries NI.

13.2 The Director of Planning and Performance thanked Members for their support over the past couple of years and said it had been a privilege to work with them. She also said that she had enjoyed working with the other members of the Senior Management Team and wished Libraries NI every success in the future.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14.1 Members noted that the next Board Meeting would take place on Thursday 14 April 2011 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

15. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

15.1 The meeting ended at 1.00 pm.

15.2 All members arrived for the commencement of the meeting and remained until it ended with the exception of the following:

Councillor Miss C Lockhart arrived at 10.42 am
Councillor A Ewart arrived at 10.48 am

Signed: [Signature]
Date: 14th April 2011