LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

14 October 2010

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on Thursday 14 October 2010 at 10.30 am in Antrim Library

PRESENT

Dr David Elliott Chairperson
Alderman Hubert Nicholl Vice Chairperson
Councillor Mrs Anne Brolly
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Sam Cole
Mr Roger Dixon
Councillor Mrs Roberta Dunlop
Councillor Allan Ewart
Councillor Miss Carla Lockhart
Councillor Cathal Mullaghan
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Jim Rodgers
Ms Helen Roulston
Councillor Seamus Shields

APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Mr Pat Carvill
Mr Nigel Macartney
Councillor Mrs Evelyne Robinson
Ms Jane Williams
Alastair Hughes Head of Libraries Branch, DCAL

IN ATTENDANCE

Chief Executive Ms Irene Knox
Director of Planning & Performance Mrs Anne Connolly
Director of Service Delivery Ms Helen Osborn
Director of Business Support Mr Terry Heron
Head of Internal Audit Mr Brian Doherty

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 ElfNI 2 project and the Belfast Central
Library project and indicated that he would withdraw at relevant stages during the meeting.

2. **CHAIRPERSON’S BUSINESS**

**Congratulations**

2.1 The Chairperson extended congratulations to:
- Councillor Mrs E Robinson on being elected President of NILGA
- Ms H Roulston on her reappointment to the Board of DHSSPS

**Welcome**

2.2 The Chairperson welcomed Councillor Mrs Roberta Dunlop to the meeting and extended best wishes to her for a speedy recovery from illness.

**Committee Membership**

2.3 It was noted that Councillor S Shields, who was currently not a member of any Committee, had expressed an interest in becoming a member of the Services Committee. Members agreed that Councillor Shields should be appointed to the Services Committee.

**Bi-lateral meeting with DCAL Minister held on 11 October 2010.**

2.4 The Chairperson informed Members that he and the Chief Executive had met with Minister McCausland on Monday 11 October 2010. Items discussed included:

- The Budget 2010 process including the savings already made by Libraries NI and the impact on services of a further proposed reduction of 17% in budget.

- The ELFNI replacement programme including concerns about the implications for procurement of cuts in both capital and recurrent budgets. The Chairperson had informed the Minister of a potential conflict of interest with this programme.

- Belfast Central Library – The Minister was updated regarding the timetable for submission of the Outline Business Case. The Chairperson had informed the Minister of a potential conflict of interest with this project.

- Phase 2 Strategic Review – It was noted that a separate meeting with the Minister had been arranged for Tuesday 23 November to brief him on the proposals.

- Merchandising – It was noted that the Minister was keen that Libraries NI and other ALBs should explore opportunities to generate income. It was agreed that the Chief Executive should consider this matter further.
• Friends of Libraries – Members noted that the Minister was keen to explore the possibility of establishing Friends of Libraries Groups. The Chief Executive had agreed to explore this matter further.

• Legal Deposit Library for Northern Ireland – Members noted that the Minister had asked the Department to investigate the viability of establishing a Legal Deposit Library. The Chief Executive and Director of Service Delivery briefed Members on the role of a Legal Deposit Library and the associated costs, which were substantial. In discussion with the Minister it became clear that his concern was to ensure that material relevant to the Ulster diaspora, regardless of place of publication, was obtained and preserved by Libraries NI. This aim would not be achieved by the establishment of a Legal Deposit Library.

It was noted that the Northern Ireland Publications Resource (NIPR) had been established a number of years previously for the purpose of acquiring and preserving a copy of every book, pamphlet, periodical and report published in Northern Ireland. Funding was provided from DCAL to assist with this work, but since there was no statutory basis which required publishers to provide copies of their publications to NIPR, the success of the scheme depended heavily on the co-operation of publishers and their willingness to donate copies of publications. The Director of Service Delivery noted that ways of addressing the concerns of the Minister would be investigated further by the Heritage and Stock Teams.

Extranet Site

2.5 The Chairperson noted that the Extranet site was operational and encouraged Members to use it to access Board and Committee papers and other relevant documentation. He reminded Members that it was intended, within the next couple of months, to send out by post only minutes of meetings and key papers to Members in order to reduce costs.

2.6 Official Openings
The Chairperson thanked all those involved in the arrangements for the official re-opening of Whitehead Library and Keady Library and, in particular, Mrs Joan Christie OBE, Lord Lieutenant of County Antrim who had opened Whitehead Library and Mrs Rosalie Flanagan, Permanent Secretary, DCAL who had opened Keady Library.
3. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

AQs 2 July – 1 October 2010

3.1 Members noted the Minister’s response to Assembly Questions during the period 2 July – 1 October 2010.

CAL Committee

3.2 Members noted the DCAL submission to the CAL Committee on Budget 2010, together with the Libraries NI submission and presentation to the Committee meeting, held on 23 September 2010, which had been attended by Councillor Mrs E Robinson, Chairperson of Business Support Committee, Mr T Heron, Director of Business Support and the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive reported that Libraries NI had been received sympathetically by Members of the CAL Committee who had recognized the efficiencies already delivered by Libraries NI since its establishment.

Members reiterated their concerns about the implications of future reductions in the library budget on staffing, stock and services. Concern was expressed also about the priority that would be given to the public library service in light of other pressures on the Northern Ireland Block Grant. Members agreed that there was a need to continue to ensure that they took every opportunity to highlight the important role that the public library service played, the impact that reductions in services would have on the quality of life of individuals and communities and their contribution to wider government priorities such as education, health, social inclusion and community cohesion.

In response to a question about the use of agency staff, the Chief Executive indicated that work was underway to review staffing requirements with a view to reducing reliance on temporary and agency staff. However until the implications of the Budget 2010 process were known some degree of flexibility in relation to staffing levels would need to be maintained.

Castlereagh Borough Council

3.3 It was noted that the Chairperson, the Chief Executive and Ms A Adair, Business Manager, had attended a meeting of Castlereagh Council on 23 September to discuss the closure of libraries in the Council area and to seek the Council’s support to improve the usage of Tullycarnet Library by improving services in the Tullycarnet and surrounding areas.

PRONI@Cregagh

3.4 Members noted the partnership with PRONI to provide access to their resources at Cregagh Library while the PRONI offices were closed pending their move to new premises in the Titanic Quarter. Minister McCausland had officially launched the service at Cregagh Library on Thursday 30 September 2010.
In response to a question the Chief Executive confirmed that the redevelopment of Cregagh Library had been identified as a priority during Phase 1 of the Strategic Review of Library Provision, but that plans to do so would depend on approval of a Business Case and the availability of capital funding.

**Dungiven Library**

3.5 Members noted that the new library in Dungiven had opened to the public on Friday 8 October 2010. Councillor Mrs A Brolly informed Members that she had received numerous cards and positive comments about the new library and that local people were seeking to raise funds to procure a piece of public art to be sited outside the library.

**Young Sports Journalist of the Year**

3.6 Members noted that the Young Sports Journalist of the Year competition had been organized in conjunction with the "All our Saturdays" exhibition and was sponsored by the Belfast Telegraph and the Belfast Giants. The Chief Executive informed Members that she had spent an enjoyable evening at a Belfast Giant's game on Saturday 9 October with the 3 finalists who then wrote an article on the game to be judged by Mr Jim Gracey, Sports Editor of the Belfast Telegraph. Mr Gracey had been so impressed by the work of the three finalists that he had agreed to offer all of them a week's work experience at the newspaper.

**Official Openings**

3.7 The Chief Executive thanked all staff involved in the official openings of Whitehead and Keady libraries and thanked Board Members for their support. She reminded Members that Antrim Library would be officially opened on Wednesday 20 October at 11.00 am.

4. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 8 JULY 2010**

4.1 On a proposal by Mr R Dixon, seconded by Councillor A Ewart, the minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2010 were adopted with the following amendment:

Paragraph 3.12 point no 2 last sentence should read as follows:

"While supporting the need for redevelopment of Belfast Central Library, Members felt that this should not be at the cost of investment needed to improve facilities elsewhere. "

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5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 8 JULY 2010  

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

5.2 The Chairperson withdrew from the meeting and the Vice-Chairperson, Alderman H Nicholl, assumed the chair.

Item 1.5: Declaration of Interests

5.3 On a proposal by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, seconded by Mr R Dixon, Members agreed to go into committee.

On a proposal by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, seconded by Mr R Dixon, Members agreed to come out of committee.

The Chairperson returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.

The Vice-Chairperson reported that while in committee the Board had considered a draft letter from the Chief Executive to DCAL in relation to the Chairperson’s perceived conflict of interest and agreed a number of amendments. The Board had also agreed that the Chief Executive should arrange for a meeting with the Permanent Secretary and other DCAL officials to progress this matter. The Vice-Chairperson of the Board and the Chairperson of Audit and Risk Committee would accompany her to the meeting.

Item 2.3.4: Circulation of Papers

5.4 Members noted that the Extranet was now operational and that Board and Committee minutes, agendas and papers would be posted on the site. It was hoped that Members would avail of this facility as an alternative to receiving all documentation in hard copy.

Item 3.14: Budget 2010 Process

5.5 Members noted that this process was ongoing and was dependent on the outcome of the spending review.

Item 4: Deputations

5.6 Members noted the application for leave for a judicial review and the withdrawal of the application. It was also noted that Libraries NI would bear the costs of the judicial review as the petitioner was in receipt of Legal Aid. The Chief Executive agreed to bring information to the Board on the costs of defending the action when available.

Item 11.2: Invest to Save

5.7 It was noted that a Business Case had been submitted to DCAL for approval to implement a voluntary redundancy programme during this financial year.
5.8 **Item 11.9: Annual Report and Accounts** Members noted that the Northern Ireland Audit Office was continuing its audit of the 2009/10 Annual Accounts. It was hoped that the work would be completed during November to allow for the Accounts to be certified at the next Board meeting, scheduled for 9 December. In view of the tight timescale for turnaround of the certified accounts and the laying before the Assembly, it may be necessary, however, to hold special meetings of the Board, the Business Support Committee and the Audit and Risk Committee.

5.9 **Key Performance Indicators** The Chief Executive drew attention to the tabled document which provided information on progress against Key Performance Indicators. It was noted that work to refine and harmonise systems for the collection of Key Performance information was still underway.

5.10 In response to questions from Members on Matters Arising from the Minutes, it was agreed that:

- a report would be brought to the next meeting of the Business Support Committee on the work that was underway in relation to the disposal of properties closed as a result of Phase 1 of the Strategic Review of Library Provision in Greater Belfast, including an update on discussions with the Lower Oldpark Community Association regarding their interest in Oldpark Library

- a report on the review of Standing Orders would be brought to the next Board Meeting.

6. **MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 AUGUST 2010** (LNI 03.10.10)

6.1 In the absence of Councillor Mrs E Robinson, Chairperson of Business Support Committee, the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor C Mullaghan, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 25 August 2010 for approval and drew attention to the following items:

6.2 **Item 13.1: Annual Report and Accounts 2009/10** Members noted that the audit was progressing more slowly than had originally been anticipated. The Director of Business Support reported that the Audit Manager had indicated that 90% of the fieldwork had been completed but that some outstanding queries remained e.g. in relation to pension liability and opening balances which would require discussion and agreement by all parties, including the NIAO, DCAL, DFP and the Education and Library Boards. Various meetings were planned to try to resolve these issues.

6.3 **Item 6.4: Finance Report: Capital Report to July 2010** Mr A McDowell enquired if a paper had been brought to the Business Support Committee in relation to the two Regional Administrative
Centres. The Director of Business Support replied that a tabled paper had been considered by Members at the meeting and returned when the meeting was finished.

Item 5.1.9: Vandalism
6.4 In response to a request for an update regarding the vandalism which had occurred at the Regional Administrative Centre in Ballymena, the Director of Business Support reported that although the incident had been captured on CCTV the images were not clear enough for prosecution purposes. The Director of Planning and Performance reported on a meeting with the PSNI to discuss the increased level of vandalism in the area and noted that police activity had improved. No further acts of vandalism had taken place.

Item 7: Invest to Save
6.5 Members noted the response from the Permanent Secretary regarding the Invest to Save initiative.

Item 10: Information Systems Programme
6.6 The Chairperson withdrew from the meeting for this item and the Vice-Chairperson, Alderman H Nicholl, assumed the Chair.

On a proposal by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, seconded by Mr R Dixon, Members agreed to go into committee.

On a proposal by Councillor Mrs A Brolly, seconded by Mr R Dixon, Members agreed to come out of committee.

The Chairperson returned to the meeting and resumed the chair.

The Vice-Chairperson reported that while in committee the Board had received an update on work being taken forward in conjunction with a specialist library adviser to assist with the development of the Outline Business Case for the ELFNI replacement programme. Members had also considered the risks associated with the ELFNI programme as discussed at the Audit and Risk Committee on 22 September 2010, and noted, in particular, concerns regarding the timetable for replacement and that business continuity contingency plans were being developed which would be considered by the Business Support Committee.

Item 11: CSR Correspondence
6.7 Members noted the grave concerns expressed at the last Business Support Committee regarding the proposed 17% cuts to the recurrent and capital budget during the 4 year CSR period (2011/12 – 2014/15).

6.8 On a proposal by Councillor C Mullaghan, seconded by Mr R Dixon, Members agreed to adopt the minutes of the meeting.
7. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 SEPTEMBER 2010  
(LNI 04.10.10)

7.1 In the absence of the Chairperson of Services Committee, Mr N Macartney, and the Vice-Chairperson of Services Committee, Ms J Williams, the Vice-Chairperson of the Board Alderman H Nicholl presented the minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2010 and drew Members’ attention to the undernoted items.

**Item 7.1: ETI Libraries Follow-up Evaluation**

7.2 Members noted that the initial inspection had taken place prior to the establishment of Libraries NI and that areas of improvement mentioned in the report had since been addressed and the report overall found that substantial progress had been made.

**Item 8: Business Plan Update**

7.3 Members noted progress at the end of the first quarter in relation to the targets contained in the Business Plan. The Director of Planning and Performance reported that work was underway to refine the reporting process to ensure a focus on key performance indicators.

**Item 9: Stage Two Strategic Review Update**

7.4 Members were reminded that a Workshop to discuss this issue would take place before the Services Committee meeting on Thursday 4 November 2010.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that, in the interests of consistency, the Phase 2 review would use the same criteria and processes, as had been applied to the Greater Belfast area.

7.5 On a proposal by Councillor A Ewart, seconded by Alderman H Nicholl, Members agreed to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

8. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2010  
(LNI 05.10.10)

The Chairperson, Mr A McDowell, presented the minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 22 September 2010 and drew attention to the undernoted matters.

**Item 7: Internal Audit Activity Report (July – September 2010)**

8.1 Members noted the concern expressed by the Committee in respect of the limited assurance level given to both the Building Maintenance and Payroll audits. Progress in addressing the recommendations made in the reports would be monitored by the Audit and Risk Committee and follow-up audits would be carried out before the end of the financial year.
Item 9: Quarterly Assurance Statement (Period ended 30 June 2010)

8.2 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee referred to the above item and advised Members that the Chief Executive was required to complete the Quarterly Assurance Statement and forward to DCAL within a limited timescale. The Audit and Risk Committee had been advised by DCAL that they should review the completed Statement, however, it was not feasible for the Committee to do so prior to submission to DCAL because of the tight timescale. The Chairperson advised Members that this matter would be discussed with DCAL with a view to finding an acceptable way forward.

Item 12: Risk Management Report and Review

8.3 Members were reminded that the Chief Executive would give a presentation on the Corporate Risk Register later in the meeting.

8.4 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Ms H Roulston, Members agreed to adopt the minutes of the meeting.

9. PRESENTATION ON CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

(LNI 06.10.10)

9.1 The Chief Executive gave a presentation on the Corporate Risk Register highlighting to Members the processes involved in identifying and managing risk within the organization as well as the key corporate risks and the actions being taken to address them. Members noted also the importance of the Corporate Risk Register being owned by the Board.

9.2 In response to questions and comments from Members the Chief Executive agreed action as follows:

- to review the wording and status of the risk in relation to the ELFNI replacement programme (Objective 1) in light of the timetable for procurement and implementation
- to keep under review action that may be required in light of the outcome of the Budget 2010 process
- to consider whether the risk appetite in relation to Objective 5 (upholding the reputation and integrity of Libraries NI among stakeholders) should be classified as minimal or cautious
- to make arrangements for the Board to review formally each year the Corporate Risk Register when approving the Business Plan

9.3 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee thanked the Chief Executive for the helpful presentation. Members endorsed the Corporate Risk Register.
10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Members were reminded that a Workshop regarding Stage 2 of the Strategic Review would be held on 4 November 2010 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library. The Services Committee meeting would follow the Workshop.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

11.1 Members noted that the next Board Meeting would take place on Thursday 9 December at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library. It was also noted that it may be necessary to hold a meeting in November due to the tight timetable for certification and laying of the Accounts.

12. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

12.1 The meeting ended at 1.08 pm.

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

Councillor S Shields arrived at 10.41 am
Councillor Miss C Lockhart arrived at 10.43 am
Councillor J Rodgers left at 12.15 pm

Signed: [Signature]
Date: 9th Dec 2010