LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

12 December 2013

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on Thursday 12 December 2013 at 10.30 am in Antrim Library

PRESENT

Mr Nigel Macartney	Chairperson
Councillor Mrs Anne Brolly
Mr Pat Carvill
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Sam Cole
Mr Roger Dixon
Mr Alastair McDowell
Ms Angela Matthews
Councillor John O’Kane
Councillor Mrs Evelyne Robinson
Councillor Jim Rodgers
Ms Helen Roulston
Ms Jane Williams

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Irene Knox	Chief Executive
Mr Terry Heron	Director of Business Support
Ms Helen Osborn	Director of Library Services
Mr Desi Miskelly	Assets Manager
Ms Mandy Bryson	Assistant Director
Mr Desi Curry	Head of ICU/ICT
Ms Trisha Ward	Assistant Director

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Councillor Hubert Nicholl	Vice-Chairperson
Alderman Allan Ewart
Councillor Ms Carla Lockhart
Councillor Mrs Marion Smith

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

2.1 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. No interests were declared.

3. **CHAIRPERSON’S BUSINESS**

3.1 On a proposal by Councillor Mrs E Robinson, seconded by Mr R Dixon, Members agreed that Agenda Item 9, e2: Presentation by Mr D Curry, Head of ICU/ICT and Ms T Ward, Assistant Director should be taken immediately after Chief Executive’s Business followed by Agenda Item 11, Minutes of the Services Committee held on 19 November 2013.

3.2 The Chairperson thanked Mr D Miskelly, Assets Manager and Ms M Bryson, Assistant Director for their presentation on the Belfast Central Library Outline Business Case which took place prior to the Board Meeting and which provided an opportunity for those Members who were unable to attend the Business Support Committee on 27 November 2013 to see the presentation. Councillor Mrs E Robinson thanked officers for the presentation and for answering questions so diligently.

3.3 The Chairperson informed Members that on 9 December 2013 the DCAL Minister had written to Ms A Matthews, Ms H Roulston and Mr R Dixon confirming the continuation of their membership of the Board of Libraries NI until the appointment process had been completed. He added that no further information was forthcoming from the Department regarding the timescale for the appointment of new Board Members.

3.4 Members noted the tabled letter, dated 4 December 2013, from the DCAL Minister regarding the Mobile Library Strategy. It was agreed to discuss this issue further under Chief Executive’s Business.

3.5 Attention was drawn to correspondence from the DCAL Minister, dated 10 December 2013, regarding the Budget Zero Basing Exercise for 2014/15 in which she indicated that she wished to meet the Chairperson and Chief Executive to explore further how best to continue to embed the key priority of promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion. Members noted that the meeting had been arranged for 7 January 2014.

3.6 The Chairperson reminded Members of the requirement for an annual Board Effectiveness Review and indicated that this would be included as an agenda item for the January 2014 meeting.

3.7 Members noted that the Chairperson and Chief Executive had received invitations to the launch of the Strategy for Public Libraries in the Republic of Ireland, to take place on 19 December 2013 in Dublin. Since neither the Chairperson nor Chief Executive was able to attend, he asked any Member interested in attending in their place to contact the Chief Executive’s Office.

3.8 The Chairperson informed Members of correspondence from the Permanent Secretary setting out the Department’s proposals regarding the appointment
process, training and appraisal of Board Members of Arms’ Length Bodies. The deadline for comments is 31 December 2013. The Chairman agreed to arrange circulation of the document to interested Board Members and indicated that he would welcome any comments from them.

3.9 Members were reminded that arrangements had been made for a photographer to take a group photograph at approximately 11.30 am.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

Assembly Questions

4.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Assembly Questions received, and the Minister’s response given during the period 18 October 2013 – 29 November 2013.

Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee: Investigation into Gaps in Child Protection and Safeguarding across the Culture, Arts and Leisure Remit

4.2 The Chief Executive drew attention to the CAL Committee’s report on its investigation into gaps in child protection and safeguarding. It was noted that DCAL had held a meeting of its Safeguarding Forum, which includes staff with responsibility for safeguarding within all the ALBs, to discuss the report and receive comments for inclusion in its response. A written response had also been requested. Officers will now review the Libraries NI Safeguarding Policy in light of the Committee’s report and report to the Services Committee meeting in May 2014.

NIAO Report on Capital Management by DCAL

4.3 Members noted the correspondence, dated 28 November 2013, from the Permanent Secretary regarding the response to the NIAO Report. The Director of Business Support reported on the Sponsorship Forum meeting on 4 December 2013, which he had attended, together with the Finance Manager and Assets Manager, to discuss the lessons learned from the report.

Business Plan 2014/15

4.4 The Chief Executive drew attention to correspondence, dated 28 November 2013, from DCAL commissioning the 2014/15 Business Plan and to the enclosed guidance on the content and format of the Business Plan. It was noted that a meeting had been arranged with Department officials for 18 December 2013 to discuss the process. It was intended to bring a draft of the Business Plan to the Board for discussion at its next meeting, scheduled for 30 January 2014.

New Mobile Library Schedules

4.5 The Chief Executive reminded Members that following Board approval of the new Mobile Library Strategy, new mobile library schedules, based on the strategy, would be implemented from 6 January 2014.
The new schedules aim to increase the number of people who have access to a mobile library. The new schedules would also mean a change of routine for some existing customers, who may visit the mobile library on a different day or at a different time or, in a few cases, at a different location. Staff were promoting the service to existing customers throughout December.

Members noted that Libraries NI had written to stakeholders including MLAs and local councils, to make them aware of the new arrangements and after Christmas would begin to promote the new schedules much more proactively.

**Belfast Healthy Cities**

4.6 Members noted that the Health in Mind project was highly commended in the Promoting Health Equity category at the Belfast Healthy Cities 25th anniversary award ceremony held in the Belfast Harbour Commissioners on 29 November 2013. Members asked that their thanks and congratulations to all involved in the project be noted in the minutes.

**DCAL Letter regarding Authority to recruit staff below tier 3 level**

4.7 Members noted the correspondence from the DCAL Minister, dated 5 December 2013, reinstating authority to the Chief Executive as Accounting Officer of Libraries NI to recruit staff below tier 3 level within the organisation.

5. **e2: PRESENTATION BY DESI CURRY, HEAD OF ICU/ICT AND TRISHA WARD, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR**

5.1 The Chairperson welcomed Mr D Curry, Head of ICU/ICT and Ms T Ward, Assistant Director to the meeting.

5.2 Mr D Curry, Head of ICU/ICT explained the background to the e2 Project and the timeline of the business case process through to benefits realisation in 2015. He reported that the procurement process had been completed successfully and that the early stage of implementing the new services was going well. The key schedules of the e2 Contract were explained and how the capital budget of £8.72m was applied to payment milestones during the 2013/14 and 2014/15 financial years. The complexity of managing the transition from the previous contracts, whilst implementing the new e2 services, was explained. It was noted that, whilst some minor changes had been made to the implementation plan, all elements were still on track for successful delivery. Mr Curry reported that the period from December 2013 to March 2014 was critical in that it was during this period that the major business applications would go live.

5.3 Ms T Ward, Assistant Director explained the benefits of the e2 project. She specifically mentioned the advantages of an improved network and wifi access for staff and customers. She noted that the Library Management System provided a framework for future developments to ensure improved Virtual Library Services and better marketing and while she mentioned the challenges of the RFID self-service, she noted that experience from Bangor
Carnegie Library would help staff ensure that they could meet these challenges.

5.4 In response to questions staff answered as follows:
- all frontline staff had one day of training in relation to the new Library Management System. Further training would be arranged for the New Year including customer service training. The training needs of staff would be continually monitored and additional training would be provided as necessary.
- RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology would mean the introduction of self-service facilities in the 20 largest libraries, with existing issue desks being replaced with smaller versions and self-service kiosks being installed. However all lending stock would be tagged which would improve stock security and mean that in the future self-service could be extended to more libraries. It was noted that the new self-service system would enable staff to be released from routine tasks to engage in more programming, but that staff would also be on hand to assist users when using the RFID system.

5.5 The Chairperson thanked Mr D Curry and Ms T Ward for their interesting and informative presentation. Members congratulated them and the other members of the Project Team on their hard work and commitment in progressing the Project to this stage and wished them every success for the completion of the project.

6. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2013

6.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Councillor Mrs A Brolly presented the minutes of the meeting of the Services Committee held on 19 November 2013 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 3: Delivering Tomorrow’s Libraries Standards – DCAL
Councillor Mrs A Brolly reported on the attendance of Mr A Hughes and Mr C Mee, DCAL, to brief all Board Members on the proposals for a revised set of draft Public Library Standards (PLS). She drew attention to the issues raised by Board Members at the meeting and noted that, as agreed, a written submission, had been made.

The Chief Executive drew attention to correspondence from DCAL, acknowledging receipt of the Board’s submission.

6.2 Item 8: Matters Arising
Members noted correspondence from the Chief Executive of Larne Borough Council, dated 26 November 2013, confirming that the Council had resolved that the scheme to improve the building in which Carnlough Library was located, would go ahead at a projected cost of £320,000. Presently final documentation was being compiled to enable the tendering process to
commence, with a view to being on site in Spring 2014. Members welcomed the commitment given by the Council.

6.3 Item 9: Removal of Charges for Lost/Damaged Books for Under Fives
Members noted that the Committee was recommending approval of the proposal to remove charges for lost/damaged books for under-fives, recognising that the barrier to library use, created by the charges, was disproportionate to the income generated. It was noted that DCAL approval was required for the recommendation.

6.4 On a proposal by Councillor Ms A Brolly, seconded by Mr P Carvill, Members approved and adopted the minutes of the Services Committee held on 19 November 2013 including the recommendations contained therein.

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2013

7.1 On a proposal by Ms H Roulston, seconded by Mr R Dixon Members approved the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 17 October 2013.

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2013

8.1 Members noted the schedule which had been circulated, detailing actions taken as a result of discussions at, and decisions of the Board at the previous meeting. The Chief Executive drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted matters.

Item 3.2: Chairperson’s Business

8.2 Members noted that no further action would be taken to organise an event to mark the contribution of independent Board Members and to celebrate the success of the Board over the last four years until confirmation was received from DCAL regarding appointments to the Board.

Item 4.2: Chief Executive’s Business, Belfast Central Library

8.3 It was noted that the draft Outline Business Case for Belfast Central Library was considered at the Business Support Committee meeting held on 27 November 2013.

Item 6.5: Matters arising from the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 17 October 2013

8.4 Members noted that the revised Zero Based Budgeting document had been submitted to DCAL after the Board Meeting. The Chief Executive reported that at her Accountability Meeting held on 8 November 2013, DCAL reported that the Minister had found the Zero Based Budgeting exercise informative and was of the view that it provided greater visibility on how priorities were being delivered. There are currently no indications of any proposed major
budgeting realignment/reallocations for 2014/15 and the indicative CSR budget is to be used for planning purposes.

Item 9.4: Management Report, Finance Report (at September 2013)

8.5 Members noted that approval had been received from DCAL and reported to the Business Support Committee to re-allocate the balance of the funding notified in July 2013 for the purchase of four mobile vehicles to procure delivery vans, Homecall vehicles and other minor works.

Item 10.4: Approval of Annual Report and Accounts 2012/13

8.6 It was reported that the Chief Executive and the Director of Business Support would meet with representatives from the Northern Ireland Audit Office on 19 December 2013 to discuss a way forward in relation to the valuation of Stock Assets and a further meeting would be arranged in January 2014.

The Chief Executive reported that the Annual Accounts for 2012/13 had been certified on 11 December 2013.

Item 12.2.3: Minutes of the Services Committee held on 17 September 2013, Fintona Library

8.7 It was reported that all stakeholders had been notified of the Board’s decision regarding retention of Fintona Library and that work was underway to progress the refurbishment of the building.

Item 12.2.5: Minutes of the Services Committee held on 17 September 2013, Greystone Library

8.8 It was reported that all stakeholders including the local community had been informed of the Board’s concern regarding the levels of use in Greystone Library and that progress would be reviewed in 12 months. The Chief Executive reported that she had a forthcoming meeting with the Reverend Dr W McCrea on 20 December 2013, and had recently had a meeting with Mr T Clarke MLA and Ms P Brown MLA to discuss Greystone Library.

9. MANAGEMENT REPORT

9.1 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2013/14: Quarter 2

The Chief Executive presented the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for Quarter 2 of the 2013/14 financial year. Members noted the following:

- progress in relation to the implementation of the e2 project
- some improvement in relation to sickness absence targets
- the significant increase in participation in core programmes in those libraries serving the 10% most deprived Super Output Areas. Members noted that the additional staff deployed, particularly to support the libraries serving the most deprived communities, were actively involved in community engagement and outreach work
- while issues and PAT use continue to decline participation rates in programmes and activities overall are increasing, reflecting the changing nature of the public library service.
9.2 The Chief Executive informed Members that DCAL was holding a staff conference in April 2014 and had asked Libraries NI to speak at the conference about its work in relation to tackling poverty and social exclusion.

9.3 In response to Mr McDowell's enquiry about a new membership drive as part of the e2 project, the Director of Library Services reported that Libraries NI had received permission from DCAL to carry out an advertising campaign in relation to the new wifi services and other services offered as part of e2.

Finance Report (at October 2013)

9.4 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Report as at October 2013 and explained that a total reforecast had taken place in October 2013 in consultation with all budget holders.

9.5 Members noted that there was a small projected underspend on the recurrent budget and that the capital report showed an underspend of £300,000 in relation to Lisnaskea Library which would be profiled to the 2014/15 financial year.

9.6 Members noted the Management Report.

10. QUARTERLY ASSURANCE STATEMENT: NEW DCAL TEMPLATE

LNI 04.12.13

10.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the new template for the Quarterly Assurance Statement which had been issued by DCAL in October 2013, adding that this template would be in operation from Quarter 3 (period ending 31 December 2013). Members noted that the changes primarily related to the Chairperson co-signing the statement and confirmation that consideration had been given to the inclusion of appropriate social clauses in all new procurement contracts.

10.2 Members noted the report.

11. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2013

LNI 05.12.13

11.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Councillor J Rodgers presented the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 16 October 2013 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 7: Internal Audit Activity Report

11.2 Members noted that 11 audits had been completed since the last meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in June 2013. Eight branch library audits had all received a satisfactory level of assurance whilst one Priority One rating had been given in respect of a disability access/health and safety issue.
11.3 Members noted the outcome of investigations into the Control of iPads and the cash loss at a branch library and that recommendations had been made and implemented by management to minimise the risk of incidents of this type happening again.

**Item 8: Outstanding Audit Recommendations**

11.4 Members noted that four recommendations were outstanding more than four months from the originally agreed implementation date, but that none of these was a Priority One recommendation. Members commended Officers and staff for their hard work in resolving these issues.

**Item 10: Libraries NI Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2012/13**

11.5 Members noted the update.

**Item 11: Provisional Report To Those Chartered With Governance**

11.6 Members’ disappointment at the on-going qualification in respect of Stock Assets was noted together with management’s commitment to work with the NIAO to progress this issue. A report on progress in relation to this matter would be brought to each meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.

**Item 13: Quarterly Assurance Statement (Period Ended 30 September 2013)**

11.7 Members noted that the Quarterly Assurance Statement for Quarter 2 (period ended 30 September 2013) had been recommended to the Board for approval subject to inclusion of changes and additions agreed at the meeting.

**Item 16: Board Operating Framework**

11.8 Members noted that the draft Board Operating Framework document had been recommended to the Board for approval subject to an amendment relating to the Chief Executive’s delegation limit for capital on page 18, paragraph 5.18.23.

11.9 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Councillor J Rodgers, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 16 October 2013 including any recommendations contained therein.

12. **MINUTES OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2013**

12.1 The Chairperson of the Information Systems Committee, Ms J Williams presented the minutes of the meeting of the Information Systems Committee held on 19 November 2013 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.
Item 5: Matters Arising from previous minutes, OGC Gateway 4 – Risk Potential Assessment (RPA)

12.2 It was noted that the review dates for OGC Gateway 4 had been set for 27 - 29 January 2014. A planning meeting would be held on Monday 16 December 2013.

Item 8: Risk Management

12.3 Members noted the additions to the Risk Register and that the Register reflected a cautious approach which was supported by the Committee.

Item 9: e2 Budget

12.4 Members noted the update on the e2 budget.

12.5 The next scheduled meeting of the Information Systems Committee would take place on 18 March 2013.

12.6 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Ms J Williams, seconded by Ms H Roulston, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Information Systems Committee held on 19 November 2013, including any recommendations contained therein.

13. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2013

13.1 The Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, Mr R Dixon presented the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 27 November 2013 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

Item 5: Draft Business Case for the Redevelopment of Belfast Central Library

13.2 Ms M Bryson, Assistant Director and Mr D Miskelly, Assets Manager had presented the Draft Outline Business Case for the redevelopment of Belfast Central Library. All Board Members had been invited to attend for this item and had expressed support for the vision outlined in the presentation and asked that they be kept informed of progress with the project.

Item 5: Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries Standards: Draft Board Response

13.3 All Board Members had been invited to attend for this item and had approved the draft response to the proposed Standards.

Item 10: Finance Reports

13.4 Members approved the revised budget for 2013/14 which had been presented and explained in detail by the Finance Manager.

Item 11: Sickness Absence Report

13.5 Members noted the update on the Absence Management Report and the procedures being put in place to manage absence including the appointment of additional staff in the Human Resource Department to deal exclusively with this issue.
On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Mr R Dixon, seconded by Councillor J O’Kane, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 27 November 2013, including any recommendations contained therein.

14. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

14.1 It was agreed that the presentation on Measuring Participation (in line with DeliveringTomorrow’s Libraries revised standards) which was scheduled to take place at the Board Meeting to be held on 30 January 2014 would now be deferred until March 2014 to provide time for discussion on the Board Effectiveness Review.

14.2 At the request of Board Members, the Chairperson of the Board agreed to seek clarification, at the meeting with the Minister, as to the timetable for the appointment of new Board Members.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 The next scheduled Board Meeting would take place on Thursday 30 January 2014 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

15.2 The Chairperson wished Members a Happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

16. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

16.1 The meeting ended at 12.30 pm.

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

Councillor J Rodgers arrived at 10.38 am

Councillor Mrs A Brolly left at 11.54 am

Signed: 

Date: 20/1/14