LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

10 July 2014

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on Thursday 10 July 2014 at 10.34 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT

Mr Nigel Macartney Chairperson
Councillor Hubert Nicholl Vice-Chairperson
Councillor Tom Campbell
Councillor Sam Cole
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Ms Carla Lockhart
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Séan McGuigan
Councillor John O’Kane
Mr Harry Reid
Alderman Jim Rodgers
Councillor Mrs Marion Smith
Dr Margaret Ward
Ms Jane Williams

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Irene Knox Chief Executive
Mr Terry Heron Director of Business Support
Ms Helen Osborn Director of Library Services
Mrs Rita McNamee Finance Manager
Mr Peter May Interim Permanent Secretary, DCAL

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Councillor Mrs Anne Brolly
Councillor Charlie Casey
Alderman Allan Ewart
Councillor Mrs Evelyne Robinson
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 The Chairperson welcomed Councillor T Campbell to his first meeting of the Libraries NI Board. A welcome was also extended to Mr P May, Interim Permanent Secretary, Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure.

3.2 The Chairperson informed Members that he had informed the Minister of his intention to resign from the Board of Libraries NI in the autumn. He drew attention to the tabled letter from DCAL stating that the Department would shortly be seeking applications for the position of Chairperson of the Libraries NI Board. Members expressed their regret at his decision adding that he had been a diligent and hardworking Chairperson and extended to him their best wishes. The Chairperson thanked Members, adding that he thought the Board was one of the best on which he had served. He expressed his appreciation for the support he had received from Board Members and staff at all levels in Libraries NI both as a Member of the Board and latterly as its Chairperson.

3.3 Members noted the tabled papers in relation to the Revised Budget 2014/15 and the completed Draft Savings Template which would be taken under Agenda Item 7: In Year Finance: 2014/15. It was agreed that this agenda item would be taken immediately after Chairperson’s Business.

3.4 Members also noted the tabled correspondence from Larne Borough Council regarding Carnlough Library which would be taken under Agenda Item 13: Minutes of the Services Committee held on 20 May 2014.

3.5 The Chairperson reminded Members that the appraisal process was on-going. He asked that any Board Member who had yet to return their appraisal form to the Chief Executive’s Office should do so as soon as possible. Members were reminded that if they wished to meet with him to discuss the appraisal process, they should contact him directly.

4. IN YEAR FINANCE: 2014/15

4.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the papers which had been tabled regarding In Year Finance: 2014/15 and explained the background to the potential in-year budget reduction, noting that the Northern Ireland Executive
would be considering the overall financial position in the next few weeks in the context of the June Monitoring Round. It was noted that there were significant pressures on overall budget and it was expected that financial savings would have to be made in year by government departments. She drew attention to the correspondence which she had received from the Interim Permanent Secretary, dated 25 June 2014, requiring immediate action to be taken to deliver savings, on a precautionary basis, pending decisions by the Northern Ireland Executive. Members noted also the Chief Executive's response to the Interim Permanent Secretary, dated 30 June 2014, setting out a proposed approach to addressing DCAL’s requirements and his subsequent correspondence on the same day, agreeing the proposed approach.

4.2 The Director of Business Support drew Members’ attention to the tabled paper which showed the proposed revised budget for 2014/15 based on a potential reduction of £1 million. He drew attention also to the Draft Savings Template which showed the estimated savings in each area and the business impacts of the reduction.

4.3 The Director of Library Services explained how the proposed reduction in the Libraries NI budget would affect the delivery of library services. She reported that, in order to make the savings required, budgets for areas such as travel, staff training and development, the key service priorities, marketing and planned maintenance would have to be substantially reduced, which would impact detrimentally on service delivery. Members noted that the largest budget within Libraries NI related to staffing and that all staff have contracts in place which cannot be altered in the short term; therefore planned staff savings would be achieved only through not covering short term vacancies/absences and a recruitment freeze for most new posts. Members were reminded that as a result of previous budget cuts and the subsequent review of opening hours, libraries were currently staffed at the minimum level necessary to ensure that they remain open and that service delivery, including programming could continue. Failure to provide cover in branch libraries and for mobiles and homecall vehicles, which were all single staffed, e.g. for sickness absence, annual leave, maternity leave etc. would almost certainly result in mobile and homecall vehicles being off the road on occasions, planned activities being cancelled at short notice, sections of libraries being closed to the public or ad-hoc closures of libraries where there were insufficient staff members available to ensure the health and safety of customers and staff. Concern was also expressed about reductions in the stock budget where the most significant impact would be on the more expensive material e.g. minority languages, eBooks, audio books and large print.

4.4 Mr P May, Interim Permanent Secretary, DCAL, informed Members of the financial pressures being faced by DCAL and noted that all government departments were under pressure to achieve in-year savings. He acknowledged the difficulties associated with trying to achieve savings in-year when various
programmes had already commenced as well as the on-going uncertainty regarding the actual level of savings that would be required. He informed the Board that the Executive was likely to be considering a paper from the Finance Minister on the outcome of the June Monitoring Round and its impact on 2014/15 budgets in the next few weeks. He indicated his wish to ensure as full an understanding as possible of the consequences of in-year budget reductions for service delivery in order to brief the Minister and welcomed the opportunity, therefore, to be present at the Board Meeting.

4.5 A lengthy discussion ensued as to the implications of the proposed budget reductions during which the following points were made:

- activities or programmes which would have to be stopped completed or curtailed should be identified, including the consequences for delivery of the agreed 2014/15 Business Plan and Key Performance Indicators
- there was a strong case for the public library service to receive some protection, given the contribution that it makes to education and learning as well as health and wellbeing
- a budget reduction of this magnitude would impact detrimentally on the work underway in relation to targeting poverty and social exclusion because of its resource intensive nature
- it was likely that the benefits and planned service improvements resulting from the investment made in e2 would not be fully realised
- every effort should be made to avoid ad hoc closures of libraries since this would undermine public confidence in the public library service with associated reputational risks.

4.6 Members asked that their grave concerns regarding the impact on service delivery of a reduction to the Libraries NI budget be noted by the Permanent Secretary.

4.7 The Chief Executive reminded Members of the Planning Day, scheduled for October 2014, and indicated that consideration would need to be given to the longer term implications for the service of this and potentially further budget reductions in 2015/16 and beyond.

4.8 On a proposal by Councillor Mrs M Smith, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, Members agreed reluctantly to approve the revised budget 2014/15, based on a reduction of £1 million. It was also agreed that Members should be consulted by e-mail if any further amendments were required to the 2014/15 budget allocation.

4.9 Members were reminded that the papers associated with this item were confidential.
5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

Assembly Questions
5.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Minister’s response to Written Assembly Questions during the period 4 April – 27 June 2014.

Correspondence
5.2 Members noted the correspondence received from DCAL regarding Ministerial approval for the Libraries NI Business Plan 2014/15; Budget 2010 Finance Allocations for 2013 – 2015 and the update from the Interim Permanent Secretary regarding Performance Appraisal, Diversity in Public Appointments and Training.

DCAL Research and Statistics Branch
5.3 Members noted the DCAL research publication: *Mapping the library service in Northern Ireland 2014* which showed that the implementation of the new mobile library service strategy had increased the public’s accessibility to services.

Belonging Exhibition
5.4 The Chief Executive reported that the Junior Ministers Jonathan Bell MLA and Jennifer McCann MLA, had attended the launch of the ‘Belonging’ Exhibition in Shankill Road Library on 1 May 2014. The exhibition transferred to Derry Central Library in June to mark Community Relations Week.

European Heritage Open Days: Schools Resource
5.5 Members noted that a new resource for schools had been developed by the Libraries NI Heritage staff in partnership with the Northern Ireland Environment Agency and had been launched by the Environment Minister, Mark H Durkan MLA on 7 May 2014.

MacMillan Cancer Partnership
5.6 The Chief Executive reported that a Memorandum of Understanding had been signed with MacMillan Cancer to support the provision of information and advice for cancer patients and their families. A wide range of printed information will be made available in libraries along with noticeboards to promote local community and voluntary services and library staff will also receive awareness training so they can refer customers who have enquiries to the appropriate sources of support.

DCAL Staff Conference
5.7 Members noted that the Chief Executive, Director of Library Services Ms Helen Osborn and Ms A Maxwell Area Manager had addressed the DCAL Staff Conference held on 14 May 2014 outlining work on-going in Libraries NI in relation to targeting social need.
Enniskillen Library: 'The Way We Were'

5.8 US Consult General, Gregory S Burton and Viscount Brookeborough had visited Enniskillen Library on 19 May 2014 as part of a day of events in the Library to commemorate General Eisenhower’s visit to American troops stationed in the town in May 1944 prior to the D-Day landings.

Special Adviser

5.9 The Chief Executive reported that Mr J McDermott, who had recently been appointed as Special Adviser to the DCAL Minister had met with the Libraries NI Senior Management Team on 6 May 2014 to find out more about the library service adding that both parties had found the meeting useful.

Belfast Central Library

5.10 Members noted that Mr P May, Interim Permanent Secretary, Mrs C Smith, Deputy Secretary and Mr C Mee Deputy Principal, Museums and Libraries Branch, DCAL, had visited Belfast Central Library on 30 May 2014 to discuss the proposed redevelopment project with members of the Senior Management Team and to tour the library. The purpose of the meeting was to help DCAL officials understand the current issues with the physical condition of the building and how it impedes service delivery and development.

Claire’s Awards

5.11 Members noted that the annual presentation ceremony for Claire’s Awards had taken place on 11 June 2014. The Libraries NI Health in Mind Rural Project had won the award for the Impact on an Individual. Libraries NI was highly commended in two of the other four categories – the Community Impact category for the Big Book Share in HMP Magilligan and the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) category for Project 500, which is linked to science and reading. Members congratulated all staff involved in these projects.

Derry Central Library

5.12 Members noted that the Interim Permanent Secretary had visited Derry Central Library on 13 June 2014. Derry Central Library has been accredited with the Louder than Words™ Charter which is awarded to organisations striving for excellent levels of service and accessibility for customers and employees who are deaf or have a hearing loss.

The Perfect Library

5.13 The Chief Executive reminded Members that in Spring 2014, in support of the Reading and Reader Development Strategy, Libraries NI announced its search for recommendations of favourite novels for inclusion in The Perfect Library. Hundreds of recommendations were received from customers as well as local politicians and celebrities. The final list has now been announced and contains 164 titles representing a diverse range of genres. The full list of titles is
available on the Libraries NI website and the collections will be made available in all libraries and be promoted over the summer months. Mr R Irwin, a user of Whitehead Library, was the winner of The Perfect Library competition and has received a copy of every book included in the list.

**Summer Reading Challenge**

5.14 Members were informed that the Summer Reading Challenge 2014, entitled Mythical Maze, was launched with a photo shoot in the Peace Maze in Castlewllan Forest Park on 12 June 2014. A number of children from the local primary schools were in attendance. The Challenge is being run in association with The Reading Agency and, this year for the first time, also includes a free downloadable app with competitions and games.

**DCAL Management Board**

5.15 The Chief Executive reported that she had been invited to attend, and give a presentation on the key strategic issues facing Libraries NI, at the DCAL Management Board which had met in Lisburn City Library on 24 June 2014. She informed Members that she had found the meeting to be a useful opportunity to inform DCAL of key strategic issues.

**Meeting with DCAL and DE Ministers**

5.16 The Chief Executive reported that, together with the Director of Library Services, she had attended a meeting with the DCAL and Department of Education (DE) Ministers on 26 June 2014 to brief them on the work that Libraries NI does to support children and to seek their endorsement of the Summer Reading Challenge. Both Ministers had been very positive about the range of activities in libraries and recognised the importance of reading for enjoyment. It was agreed that Libraries NI and DE should work more closely together and a series of follow-up meetings would be held with DE Officials to look at how this might be achieved, with a view to developing a Memorandum of Understanding.

**Deirdre Breen, Branch Library Manager, Lurgan**

5.17 Members noted that Deirdre Breen, Branch Library Manager in Lurgan had been awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen’s Birthday Honours for her services to libraries and the local community. Councillor Ms C Lockhart expressed her appreciation of the work undertaken by Ms Breen adding that she was also very active in the community and was well known for her charity work. It was agreed that the Chairperson should write on behalf of Members to congratulate Ms Breen.
6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 10 APRIL 2014

6.1 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, Members approved the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 10 April 2014 with the following amendment to be made to paragraph 14.1 on page 11:

- Ms J Williams name to be added to the list of members of the Services Committee

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 10 APRIL 2014

7.1 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 3.3: Chairperson’s Business

7.2 It was agreed in light of the potential financial situation, that no further action should be taken to organise a social event to mark the achievement of the Libraries NI Board over the past five years.

Item 4.11: Chief Executive’s Business, Correspondence from the Deputy Secretary, DCAL dated 7 April 2014

7.3 Members noted that the Chief Executive had written to DCAL on 11 April 2014 welcoming the proposed changes to the current governance arrangements.

Item 6.2: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 10 April 2014: University of Ulster Library and Information Management Course

7.4 It was noted that the Chairperson had written to staff members who had obtained a Masters qualification in Library and Information Management from the University of Ulster and also to the member of staff who had been awarded the Allen & Overy prize.

Item 6.7: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 10 April 2014: Board Effectiveness Review 2013/14

7.5 Members noted that arrangements were progressing regarding the ‘Away Day’ to be held on Friday 3 October 2014, and information would issue to Members in due course.
Item 6.11: Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 10 April 2014: Minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 29 January 2014

7.6 Members noted the correspondence regarding the former Ligoniel and Oldpark Libraries. The Director of Business Support reported that he had met with officials from the Department of Social Development and it had been agreed that both properties should be trawled throughout the public sector and interested parties informed accordingly. However, no interest had been shown and the properties were now being advertised publicly.

Item 7.1: Management Report, Quarterly Assurance Statement, Quarter 4 January – March 2014

7.7 Members noted that a supplementary Quarterly Assurance Statement (QAS) for the period ended 31 March 2014 had been submitted to DCAL on 11 July 2014. The revised QAS included detail of a Business Case for the replacement of four Mobile Libraries which had been approved by the Libraries NI Senior Management Team but, due to an administrative error, had not been submitted to DCAL for approval. As the value of the Business Case exceeded the Chief Executive’s delegated limit, approval should have been sought from the Department. The oversight had been identified at year end and retrospective approval has since been sought. Members noted that the draft Governance Statement 2013/14 had also been revised to reflect this issue. The Chief Executive reported that the Director of Business Support had reviewed procedures within Libraries NI and an audit of the business case approval process would be included in the internal audit plan for 2014/15 to provide assurance on the robustness of the procedures.

Item 7.2: Management Report, Quarterly Assurance Statement Quarter 4, January – March 2014

7.8 Members noted that a bid for inescapable pressures in relation to the monies to complete the new library in Lisnaskea has been submitted for the June monitoring round.

Item 7.3: Management Report, Quarterly Assurance Statement Quarter 4, January – March 2014

7.9 Members noted that a presentation on absence management, including work related stress, would be brought to a meeting of the Business Support Committee in November 2014. Councillor T Campbell stressed the importance of effective procedures being in place to support managers in dealing with sickness absenteeism and particularly stress – related absenteeism.

7.10 The Chief Executive drew attention to the tabled paper regarding Sickness Absence Targets 2014/15. She reported that over the first four months of 2014/15 there had been an improvement of 2% against the overall target for the year of an 8% reduction. She also confirmed that the Health and Wellbeing
Officer, was now in post and her role included providing support and assistance to managers in dealing with sickness absence.

Item 7.6: Management Report, Annual Board Assurance Statement 2013/14

7.11 Members noted that the amendment to the Annual Board Assurance Statement had been made and the document re-submitted to DCAL.

Item 9.2: Budget Planning 2015/16

7.12 Members noted that following the last Board Meeting held on 10 April 2014 the Chief Executive had informed DCAL of the Board’s decision regarding the budget planning exercise for 2015/16, and in doing so had made the Department aware of Board Members’ grave concerns regarding the impact of any further budget cuts on services provided by Libraries NI. Subsequently discussions had taken place with DCAL officials and draft Savings Delivery Plans, based on the paper agreed at the Board Meeting, had been submitted to DCAL. Members noted that no further information was available at this stage.

Item 10.3: Standing Orders (Revised)

7.13 Members noted that the amendment suggested at the last Board Meeting regarding maintaining a register of all deeds and documents sealed had been incorporated into the Standing Orders (Revised) document. Members also noted that further amendments had been recommended at the Business Support Committee meeting held on 5 June 2014 which would be discussed under Agenda Item 10.

Item 11.2: Code of Conduct for Board Members (Revised)

7.14 Members noted that the correction had been made to paragraph 5.8 of the Code of Conduct for Board Members (Revised). However, an amended Code of Conduct based on guidance issued by DFP after the last Board Meeting had subsequently been produced and would be discussed under Agenda Item 11.

Item 13.1: Gifts and Hospitality Guidelines for Board Members (Revised)

7.15 The Chief Executive reported that currently no Board Member had contacted her office to advise that they had connections to any of the suppliers listed at Annex C of the Gifts and Hospitality Guidelines for Board Members (Revised).

Item 16.6: Minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 26 March 2014, Stress Audit

7.16 The Chief Executive confirmed that a copy of the Stress Audit Report had been made available to staff through the intranet.

8. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2013/14 (DRAFT)    LNI 04.07.14

8.1 The Chief Executive drew Members’ attention to the Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14 (draft) and explained that these documents had been
submitted on 30 June 2014 to the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) for auditing and to DCAL for information. She added that the Draft Annual Report and Accounts had been reviewed by both the Business Support Committee and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and were in the required format.

8.2 The Chief Executive referred to the Annual Report and drew attention to the range of activities described in the management commentary and indicated that this gave only a flavour of the activities and programmes that take place in local libraries.

8.3 Members noted the Governance Statement and the Chief Executive highlighted the section on Internal Governance Divergences, focusing on prior year issues which remain relevant and new issues, which had been identified.

8.4 The Director of Business Support then drew Members' attention to the Annual Accounts and reiterated that they had been reviewed by the Business Support Committee and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and that they were in the prescribed format (NDPB Green) and were prepared in accordance with FReM with the exception of income, which was accounted for on a cash basis. He also confirmed that the NIAO checklist had been used to quality assure them prior to submission.

8.5 The Finance Manager, Ms R McNamee, presented the draft Annual Accounts in detail, drawing attention in particular to the key financial statements and the reconciliation between the normal management accounts and the Annual Accounts, demonstrating that the Board had met its financial targets. The Finance Manager also reported on the work that had been undertaken to address the limitation of scope qualification in relation to Heritage Assets, noting that progress had been made but that the qualification was likely to continue.

8.6 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Alderman J Rodgers gave his assurance to the Board that the draft Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14 had been reviewed and discussed at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held the previous day and that no amendments had been made.

8.7 Members noted that when the Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14 were certified they would be brought back to the Board for approval.

8.8 Following discussion, the Board agreed, given the extent and importance of the work that had been undertaken in relation to the Department's key priority of promoting equality and tackling poverty and social exclusion the section on Page 20 should be expanded, to include further information on libraries included in the three tiers.

8.9 Members noted the report.
9. MANAGEMENT REPORT

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2013/14: End of Year Report

9.1 The Chief Executive presented the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) End of Year Report for 2013/14 and said she was pleased to report that most of the KPI targets had been met. She added that overall participation in the library service had increased, however the target figure for requests had not been met which was largely due to the downtime whilst the e2 project was being implemented.

Business Plan 2013/14: End of Year Report

9.2 The Chief Executive presented the Business Plan 2013/14: End of Year Report. Members were pleased to note that the majority of targets had been achieved and congratulated all staff on another successful year. The Chief Executive drew attention to the amber rating against some of the targets and reported that these related mainly to work that was still underway which would be carried forward into the new financial year.

9.3 In response to a query from Mr A McDowell, the Chief Executive agreed to let Members have sight of the Standards for the Internal and External appearance of libraries.

Corporate Risk Register 2014/15

9.4 The Director of Business Support presented the Corporate Risk Register as at June 2014. He reported that the Register had been discussed in detail at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held the previous day and that in light of the new financial pressures it would be reviewed again.

9.5 Members discussed the corporate risks and the amendments made since it was last presented to them at the April Board Meeting.

Finance Report (May 2014)

9.6 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Report as at May 2014. He drew attention to the Minor Works Budget shown on the Capital Report and explained that, with DCAL approval, it was currently being used to fund the new library for Lisnaskea, pending the outcome of the June monitoring round. Members also noted that it was expected the budget for the e2 Project would be fully spent at year end. Members noted that it was expected that the Recurrent Budget would also be fully spent by year end.

9.7 Members noted the reports.
10. STANDING ORDERS (REVISED)  

10.1 The Chief Executive reminded Members that at its meeting on 10 April 2014 the Board had considered the proposed revised Standing Orders and agreed the revisions, subject to inclusion at paragraph 18.1 of a statement regarding maintaining a register of all deeds and documents sealed.

10.2 At the Business Support Committee Meeting held on 5 June 2014 further consideration had been given to Standing Orders and specifically the sealing of documents and it was agreed to recommend to the Board that all legal documents, whether using the Common Seal or not, should be dealt with under the same procedure i.e. with responsibility delegated to the Chief Executive, with strict reporting requirements through the Business Support Committee to the Board.

10.3 The Standing Orders had been revised to take account of this recommendation, as well as the addition agreed at the last Board Meeting and were being brought back to Members today for approval.

10.4 Members were reminded that the Board has reserved to itself the authority to amend Standing Orders and that any amendments must be agreed by the majority of the Members of the Board present at each of two consecutive meetings of the Board. As there were additional proposed changes to those agreed at the last Board Meeting the revised Standing Orders would need to be considered again at the next Board Meeting.

10.5 On a proposal by Councillor J O’Kane, seconded by Councillor S Cole, Members approved the Standing Orders (revised) document and noted it would be considered again at the Board Meeting to be held on 16 October 2014.

11. CODE OF CONDUCT FOR BOARD MEMBERS (REVISED)  

11.1 The Chief Executive presented the Code of Conduct for Board Members (revised) and reminded Members that at its last meeting on 10 April 2014 the Board had considered and adopted a revised Code of Conduct. However on 17 April 2014, DFP issued new guidance on Codes of Conduct for Board Members (FD(DFP)04/14) and accordingly the Code of Conduct had been revised again to take account of this new guidance.

11.2 Members noted that the Code of Conduct for Board Members (revised) had been considered by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 9 April 2014 and no amendments had been made.
11.3 Members asked that clarification be sought regarding the purport of paragraph 3.17 regarding employment and appointments and agreed in the interim to note the document, pending receipt of this clarification.

12. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 APRIL 2014

12.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Alderman J Rodgers presented the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 9 April 2014. Members noted that a verbal report on this meeting had been given at the Board Meeting held on 10 April 2014. Key issues discussed at the meeting are noted below and presented formally for adoption by the Board.

12.2 Members noted that four audits had been completed since the last meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 9 April 2014. They all had received a satisfactory level of assurance and no Priority One recommendations had been made. Members also noted that the recommendations contained in the report on the missing iPad had all been implemented or were in the process of being implemented.

12.3 Item 8: Internal Audit Activity Report (January – March 2014)

12.4 Members noted that the Head of Internal Audit had confirmed that as stated in the Internal Audit Annual Plan, 33 audits had been completed during the year, and he was content that sufficient work had been completed to provide the Chief Executive with a satisfactory level of assurance.

12.5 Item 10: Internal Audit Annual Plan 2013/14 Progress Report

12.6 Item 11: Quarterly Assurance Statement (Period Ended 31 March 2014)

12.7 Members noted that the Quarterly Assurance Statement (QAS) for the period ended 31 March 2014 had been approved by the Committee. However as previously reported a supplementary QAS had since been submitted to DCAL.

12.8 Item 16: Annual Board Assurance Statement

12.9 Members noted that the Committee had approved the Annual Board Assurance Statement for the year ending 31 March 2014, which had been prepared and presented by the Chairperson of the Board.

12.10 Item 17: Internal Audit Strategy 2014/17

12.11 Members noted that the Committee had approved the Internal Audit Strategy 2014/17.

12.12 Item 18: Internal Audit Strategy for Branch Libraries 2014/15

12.13 It was noted that the Internal Audit Strategy for Branch Libraries 2014/15 had been approved.
Item 19: Internal Audit Plan 2014/15

12.8 Members noted that the Internal Audit Plan 2014/15 had been approved by the Committee.

12.9 On a proposal by Alderman J Rodgers, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 9 April 2014 including any recommendations contained therein.

12.10 Alderman J Rodgers reminded Members that an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting had been held on 9 July 2014, the formal minutes of which would be available at the next Board Meeting to be held on 10 July 2014. Alderman Rodgers gave a brief report of items discussed as follows:

- three new members had been welcomed to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, namely Councillor Mrs Evelyne Robinson, Mrs Deirdre Kenny and Councillor Séan McGuigan
- Mr A McDowell had left the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and was now a member of the Business Support Committee. Members joined with the Chairperson in thanking Mr McDowell for his service to the Committee over the years, especially in his role as Chairperson
- four Internal Audit Reports had been considered by the Committee. All received a satisfactory level of assurance with no Priority One findings
- the Internal Audit Annual Report 2013/14 had been reviewed. The Report contains the Head of Internal Audit’s Statement of Assurance that the risk management, control and governance systems within Libraries NI were operating in a satisfactory manner
- the Committee had agreed its draft Annual Report which would be reviewed when the audit of the Accounts had been completed before presentation to the Board
- the Libraries NI Draft Annual Report and Accounts for 2013/14 had been discussed and the Committee agreed to recommend the Annual Report and Accounts to the Board for submission for audit
- the Corporate Risk Register had been considered
- the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Scheme of Delegation had been reviewed in light of the revision to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Handbook (NI)
- the revised Code of Conduct for Board Members had been considered
- the Committee had reviewed a progress report on implementation of recommendations contained in the 2012/13 Report to Those Charged With Governance
- Members had completed the National Audit Office Audit Committee self-assessment checklist and were able to conclude that the Committee was complying with the principles of best practice.

12.11 Members noted the report.
13. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 MAY 2014

13.1 In the absence of the Chairperson of the Services Committee, Councillor Mrs A Brolly, Ms J Williams presented the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2014 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

**Item 8: Safeguarding Policy and Procedures**

13.2 Members noted that a revised Safeguarding policy and associated procedures had been approved by the Committee.

**Item 9.4: Service Plan Progress Reports 2013/14**

13.3 Members were pleased to note the tabled letter from Larne Borough Council, dated 23 June 2014, regarding Carnlough Library in which the Council had confirmed its commitment to the project and that funding had been approved for the original scheme, as developed in conjunction with Libraries NI.

**Item 10: The Economic Value of Library Services – ALMA UK**

13.4 Members noted the ALMA UK Report on the Economic Value of the Library Service which had been brought to the Committee for information.

13.5 On proposal by Ms J Williams, seconded by Mr H Reid, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Services Committee held on 20 May 2014 including any recommendations contained therein.

14. MINUTES OF THE INFORMATION SYSTEMS COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 MAY 2014

14.1 The Chairperson of the Information Systems Committee, Ms J Williams, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 20 May 2014 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

**Item 6: e2 Highlight Report**

14.2 Members noted the update on the e2 Highlight Report.

**Item 8: Risk Management**

14.3 Members noted the changes to the Risk Register.

**Item 9: e2 Budget**

14.4 Members noted the e2 Budget report and that spend was as planned.

**Gateway 4 Report: Action Plan**

14.5 Members noted the updates to the Gateway 4 Report Action Plan.
14.6 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Ms J Williams, seconded by the Chairperson of the Board, Mr N Macartney, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Information Systems Committee held on 20 May 2014 including any recommendations contained therein.

15. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 5 JUNE 2014

15.1 In the absence of Councillor Mrs E Robinson who chaired the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 5 June 2014, the Chairperson of the Board Mr N Macartney presented the minutes of the meeting and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

Item 5.2: Ligoniel and Oldpark Libraries

15.2 Members noted progress made in relation to the disposal process.

Item 6: Procurement Report

15.3 Members noted the update to the Procurement Report.

Item 7: Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14

15.4 The Committee had received a detailed briefing from the Chief Executive, the Director of Business Support and the Finance Manager on the content of the Annual Report and Accounts 2013/14.

Item 9: Prompt Payment Performance

15.5 It was noted that a number of measures had been proposed by the Director of Business Support to improve payment performance for the 2014/15 financial year and that updates would continue to be brought to the Business Support Committee.

Item 10: Savings Delivery Plans Progress Report

15.6 Members noted that Libraries NI had achieved the 2013/14 savings and was on target to deliver the planned 2014/15 savings which were incorporated in the 2014/15 budget plans.

Item 11: Sealing of Documents

15.7 The Committee had recommended that a change be made to Standing Orders to the effect that all legal documents whether using the Common Seal or not should be dealt with under the same procedure, i.e. with responsibility delegated to the Chief Executive, with strict reporting requirements to the Board.

Item 12: Health and Safety Report

15.8 The Health and Safety Report 2013/14 had been noted by the Committee. There had been no dramatic change in the number of incidents which had
occurred over this period in comparison to previous years. It was agreed that Libraries NI must continue to be proactive in their approach to Health and Safety.

15.9 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board Mr N Macartney, seconded by Councillor J O'Kane, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 5 June 2014 including any recommendations contained therein.

16. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

16.1 The Chairperson reminded Members that a meeting of the Remuneration Committee would commence immediately after lunch at 1.30 pm.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 Members noted that the ‘Away Day’ for Board Members would take place on Friday 3 October 2014. Details would be forwarded to Members in due course.

17.2 The next scheduled Board Meeting would take place on Thursday 16 October 2014 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

18. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

18.1 The meeting ended at 1.00 pm.

18.2 All Members arrived for the commencement of the meeting and remained until it ended.

Signed:  

Date: 16th October 2014