LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority
12 February 2015
Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 12 February 2015 at 10:45 am in Antrim Library

PRESENT
Professor Bernard Cullen
Councillor Hubert Nicholl
Councillor Mrs Anne Brolly
Councillor Tom Campbell
Councillor Charlie Casey
Councillor Sam Cole
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Ms Angela Matthews
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Séan McGuigan
Councillor John O‘Kane
Mr Harry Reid
Councillor Mrs Evelyne Robinson
Councillor Mrs Marion Smith
Dr Margaret Ward
Ms Jane Williams

Chairperson
Vice-Chairperson

IN ATTENDANCE
Ms Irene Knox
Mr Terry Heron
Ms Helen Osborn

Chief Executive
Director of Business Support
Director of Library Services

As the Chairperson was delayed for the start of the meeting, the Vice-Chairperson
Councillor H Nicholl assumed the Chair. Members agreed to take Agenda Item 4:
Chief Executive’s Business immediately after Agenda Item 2: Declaration of
Interests.

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Alderman Jim Rodgers

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. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

3.1 The Chief Executive referred Members to the paper which had been circulated, drawing attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

Assembly Questions
3.2 Members were referred to the Minister’s response to Written Assembly Questions during the period 12 December 2014 to 6 February 2015 inclusive.

Belfast Adult Autism Advice Service (BAAS)
3.3 The launch of the Belfast Adult Autism Advice Service took place in Belfast Central Library on Wednesday 21 January 2015. The Chief Executive explained that this service was funded by the Belfast Health and Social Care Trust and delivered by The Cedar Foundation. The Minister of Health, Social Services and Public Safety, the Minister for Social Development, the Chief Medical Officer and the Chief Executive of The Cedar Foundation had attended along with an invited audience of approximately 60 representatives from the public and voluntary sectors. All the speakers recognised the value of libraries as a community resource.

Crossmaglen Library
3.4 The official opening of the refurbished Crossmaglen Community Centre, which houses Crossmaglen Library, took place on Thursday 22 January 2015 and was hosted by Newry and Mourne District Council. The newly extended Centre was officially opened by David Small, Deputy Secretary, Department of Agriculture and Rural Development on behalf of the Minister, Michelle O’Neill MLA. The refurbishment work included the Library, which is now approximately one third larger than before, with a better, more welcoming and comfortable layout.

Living Legacies
3.5 On Thursday 22 January 2015, Belfast Central Library hosted the latest in a series of events in collaboration with Living Legacies, which is based at Queen’s University and connects academics, individuals and community groups with an interest in World War One. Participants included speakers from the 6th Connaught Rangers Project and the East Belfast and The Great War Project. Members of the public were able to bring along objects relating to the war for digitisation. Dr Andrew Murray MP, Under-Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office and the Prime Minister’s Special Representative for the Centenary Commemoration of the First World War attended the event.

Aisling Exhibition
3.6 On Wednesday 4 February 2015, the DCAL Minister visited Falls Road Library to open the Aisling Exhibition which featured photographs and
recordings by a group of men from various communities in North and West Belfast, who had received support through Lighthouse, previously known as PIPS (Public Initiative for the Prevention of Suicide and Harm). The project was facilitated by Kelly Morris, photographer and Jim O’Neill from Community Dialogue who helped the men to capture their vision of themselves and their community. The Exhibition will also visit Shankill Road, Ardoyne and Grove libraries.

Creativity Month
3.7 The Chief Executive drew attention to the tabled copy of the Creativity Month brochure and reported that this was the fifth successive year that Libraries NI had participated in this DCAL initiative which was held in March each year. Members noted that the Libraries NI programme included poetry, workshops, author events, drama, storytelling, script writing workshops, music and radio broadcasting workshops. The highlight of the programme is the writer in residence, Eoin McNamee, author of 17 novels, who would be holding workshops in various libraries during March 2015.

Visit to Belfast Central Library
3.8 The Chief Executive asked that any Board Member wishing to visit Belfast Central Library should notify her office and a visit would be arranged.

CILIP Ireland/LAI Joint Conference
3.9 The Chief Executive drew attention to the draft programme for the CILIP Ireland/LAI Joint Conference 2015 which had been tabled. She reported that the joint conference is organised by the two professional bodies for library and information staff and is held biennially in Northern Ireland. This year the conference is being held in Titanic, Belfast commencing on the evening of Wednesday 8 April and finishing at lunchtime on Friday 10 April 2015. The theme of the conference is ‘Collaborate, Evaluate, Evolve’. Any Board Member wishing to attend should notify the Chief Executive’s office as soon as possible.

Libraries NI ‘shelfies’ for National Libraries Day
3.10 The Chief Executive reported that the Libraries NI ‘shelfies’ for National Libraries Day had been a great success and had captured the imagination of library staff and users, as well as many well-known personalities and local politicians. She encouraged Members to view the ‘shelfies’ on the Libraries NI Flickr account and thanked everyone who had participated in this event to make it so successful.

Correspondence from DCAL regarding Key Objectives 2015-16
3.11 The Chief Executive drew attention to the tabled letter, dated 5 February 2015, from DCAL confirming the Department’s key objectives for 2015 -16 as follows:

- To promote equality and tackle poverty and social exclusion;
- To contribute to the growth of the economy and building a united community.
These would be incorporated in the Libraries NI Draft Business Plan 2015/16.

*The Chairperson entered the meeting and assumed the Chair.*

4. **CHAIRPERSON’S BUSINESS**

4.1 The Chairperson, Professor B Cullen, apologised for being late and thanked the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor H Nicholl, for deputising for him in his absence.

4.2 The Chairperson reported that this would be the last full Board Meeting for a number of Councillor Members who had completed two terms of office. He recognised individually the Councillor Members who would be leaving at 31 March 2015 and thanked them for their contribution to the work of the Libraries NI Board. He noted that the recruitment process for new Councillor Members had commenced and hoped that the Minister would be in a position to make an announcement about the new Members within the next few weeks. He noted also that three Councillor Members have completed one term of office and accordingly were eligible to be considered for reappointment by the Minister.

4.3 Various Councillor Members took the opportunity to express regret that their term of office had come to an end. They spoke of some of the difficult decisions that had been made during their tenure and the sense of corporate responsibility which had been a feature of the Board, even in the most challenging times. They thanked the Chief Executive and the senior team for their work and for their open and transparent approach to working with Board Members. They also recorded their thanks to Mary McGrady, who provided secretarial support for the Board, expressing their appreciation of her efficiency and the willingness with which she dealt with any queries that they might have.

4.4 Ms J Williams, on behalf of the independent Members, recognised the contribution made by Councillor Members over the past five years and wished them well for the future.

4.5 The Chief Executive, on behalf of Libraries NI staff, thanked the Members for their kind remarks adding that she had enjoyed working with each of them and had appreciated the support she had received. She encouraged all Members, past and present, to keep supporting their local libraries. Members were reminded that an event to mark the service of Board Members would be arranged as soon as possible.

4.6 The Chairperson reported that he had attended the Living Legacies event in Belfast Central Library on 22 January 2015 and the launch of the Aisling Exhibition in Falls Road Library on 4 February 2015. He informed Members that both these events had been well attended and, in particular, he had found the Aisling Exhibition very moving.
5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2014

5.1 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Board, Councillor H Nicholl, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, Members approved the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 11 December 2014.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 11 DECEMBER 2014

6.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the circulated paper detailing action taken as a result of discussions at, and decisions of, the Board at the previous meeting. She drew attention in particular to the matters noted below.

Item 3.3: DCAL ALB Strategic Forum

6.2 Members noted correspondence dated 13 January 2015 from Ms C Smith, Acting Permanent Secretary, DCAL to the Chairperson of the Board which included the minutes of the DCAL ALB Strategic Forum held on 8 December 2014. In her correspondence the Acting Permanent Secretary had asked for nominations for three working groups. Members noted the Libraries NI response of 20 January 2015 which included nominations to the DCAL Working Groups.

Item 10.3: Draft Business Plan 2015/16

6.3 The Chief Executive drew attention to the tabled letter received from DCAL on 11 February 2015 asking that minor amendments be made to the Draft Business Plan 2015/16. She reminded Members that at the last Board Meeting they had agreed to delegate authority to herself and the Chairperson to agree any minor amendments to the Business Plan before re-submitting it to the Department for approval. Members confirmed that they were content that the amendments suggested by DCAL were minor and that the revised Business Plan should be re-submitted following consultation with the Chairperson.

7. BUDGET 2015/16

Payroll Reduction Projections 2015/16 – 2018/19

7.1 On a proposal by Councillor H Nicholl, seconded by Councillor T Campbell, the Board agreed to go into committee for this item.

7.2 On a proposal by Councillor H Nicholl, seconded by Councillor T Campbell, the Board came out of committee.

7.3 While in committee the Board received a briefing from the Director of Business Support on information requested by DCAL in relation to potential future patterns of staff departures through voluntary exit schemes to inform its work on the development and management of the voluntary exit
programme. The main objective of the exercise was to provide information for DFP to help to quantify the overall funding that would be required year by year to support such schemes. The Director of Business Support also responded to questions from Members.

Revised Savings Delivery Plans and High Level Impact Assessments

7.4 The Director of Business Support referred to the Savings Delivery Plans and High Level Impact Assessments and drew attention to revisions made since last seen by Members. He informed the Board that DCAL had published the Savings Delivery Plans and High Level Impact Assessments from all its ALBs, together with an Equality Impact Assessment, on its website that week.

7.5 On a proposal by Councillor T Campbell, seconded by Councillor J O’Kane, Members approved the Revised Savings Delivery Plans and High Level Impact Assessments.

As Councillor Mrs A Brolly had to leave the meeting early, Members agreed to take Agenda Item 11: Minutes of the Services Committee held on 21 January 2015 as the next order of business

8. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2015

8.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Councillor Mrs A Brolly, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2015 and drew attention, in particular, to the undemoted items.

8.2 Item 7: Media Handling Policy
The Committee had considered a revised Media Handling Policy and had asked for some amendments to be made. The revised Policy would be brought back to a future Committee meeting.

Item 8: RFID – Helping People to Help Themselves

8.3 Ms H Poston, Operations Manager, had made a presentation to the Committee on RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) kiosks. Ms Poston had overseen the rollout of RFID in 19 libraries as part of the e2 project. It was noted that the kiosks enable customers to carry out routine processes themselves, allowing staff more time to concentrate on developing and delivering programmes. Members were encouraged to hear that the 80% target for self-service use had been exceeded.


8.4 The Committee had been briefed on the Llywodraeth Cymru/Welsh Government Report ‘Expert Review of Public Libraries 2014’ by the Director of Library Services.
Item 10: Opportunities for All

8.5 The Director of Library Services presented the report ‘Opportunities for All’, the current five year strategy for public libraries in the Republic of Ireland. She explained that ‘open libraries,’ was being piloted in three places in the Republic of Ireland. This idea which came from Scandinavia, involves clever use of technology which means that a small library can have extended opening hours during which a restricted range of services is offered without staff being present.

Item 11: Public Lending Right

8.6 Members noted the update on the Public Lending Right (PLR) and that Libraries NI would continue to be part of the PLR sample in 2015/16. Members were reminded that this was the arrangement by which authors received payment for the loans of their books by public libraries and that Libraries NI had been part of this sample since its inception.

8.7 On a proposal by Councillor S Cole, seconded by Ms J Williams, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Services Committee held on 21 January 2015, including any recommendations contained therein.

9. REVIEW OF OPENING HOURS

9.1 The Director of Library Services referred to the Review of Opening Hours paper and reminded Members that they had agreed a set of principles and the process for the review of opening hours at the December Board meeting. She drew attention to two further principles being proposed as follows:

- no library should be open for less than 18 hours per week. If a library is open for less than this, it is difficult to provide a range of opening hours to suit different customers and to deliver a minimum range of programmes. Many of the libraries which are currently open for 18 hours per week are in rural communities

- no library serving areas of substantial social deprivation (as listed in the 2015/16 Draft Business Plan) should have its hours reduced by more than 10%. This was being proposed because tackling poverty and social exclusion was a key priority in the Programme for Government and for DCAL.

9.2 Members noted that public consultation on the draft policy, which set out the overarching approach to establishing the opening hours of libraries, and the impact of that policy on the opening hours of each library in the context of the 2015/16 draft budget, would commence on 18 February 2015 and run until 17 April 2015. A draft Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) and draft Rural Impact Assessment (RIA) had also been produced and would be published for comment as part of the consultation process.

9.3 The Director of Library Services reported that the ‘emergency’ opening hours, introduced in November 2014 in order to make the in-year savings required by DCAL, would continue pending the outcome of the public
consultation process and subsequent consideration by the Board of the way forward. In order to achieve the level of savings required the new opening hours would need to be in place by October 2015.

9.4 Members noted that the actual pattern of opening hours in each library would be decided during the second phase of the process, when questionnaires would be available in each library with proposed patterns of opening hours so that customers could indicate the pattern which best met local needs. In response to a question, the Director of Library Services confirmed that, where possible and depending on the preferences expressed by customers, the pattern of opening hours of neighbouring libraries would complement each other in order to provide the widest possible range of opening hours for the wider community. She added that this level of detail would be addressed at local level within the consultation process.

9.5 Following discussion, on a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Mr A McDowell, Members approved the Review of Opening Hours paper.

10. STATISTICAL BULLETIN: PARTICIPATION IN CORE AND REGULAR LIBRARY ACTIVITIES IN NORTHERN IRELAND 2013/14: ANNUAL REPORT

10.1 The Chief Executive referred to the statistical bulletin and reminded Members that Libraries NI was listed as a producer of official statistics in the Official Statistics Order (Northern Ireland) 2012 and is therefore required to produce official statistics on an annual basis. A statistician from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) is seconded to Libraries NI and is responsible for ensuring that statistics comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

10.2 The Chief Executive reported that this was the second year that official statistics had been produced and that this bulletin provided detailed information on participation levels in 2013/14, with comparisons made against 2012/13. She drew attention to some of the key statistics, noting the increased levels of participation in core programmes, such as Rhythm and Rhyme, class visits and storytime, in 2013/14.

10.3 Mr McDowell queried whether improving adult literacy was an area that, in future could be considered as a core activity for Libraries NI and whether funding might be available from other sources to provide services in this important area. The Director of Library Services indicated that in the past the public library service had been involved in supporting adult literacy, however it was very staff intensive and resource constraints limited the amount of support that could be provided. She reported on the Six Book Challenge which supported reluctant and emergent readers, indicating that Libraries NI did offer this programme. She agreed to give consideration to the possibility of a pilot programme, which the Chairperson suggested might link with the work in the Job Clubs.
10.4 The Board noted the Statistical Bulletin.

11. MANAGEMENT REPORT

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs): End of Quarter 3  LNI 06.02.15(i)

11.1 The Chief Executive presented the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) at the end of Quarter 3 (i.e. for the period April to December 2014). She reported as follows:

- participation levels in the libraries serving areas of substantial social deprivation had been impacted by the introduction of ‘emergency’ opening hours, the release of agency staff as a result of the in-year budget cuts and the ending of ‘backfill’ to enable Branch Library Managers to undertake more outreach work
- usage of the mobile library service had increased significantly since the introduction of the new mobile library strategy
- the use of eBooks continues to increase
- the introduction of free WiFi is proving popular.

11.2 The Chief Executive drew attention to the two Sickness Absence Reports and explained that the first report (previously provided to Members) included all absences reported for staff in the previous 12 months including those who after a prolonged period of absence were retired on ill-health grounds. The second report was prepared as a result of the discussion at the Business Support Committee in November 2014. In the second report leaver data is removed in the month following the departure of a member of staff rather than waiting for 12 months. This provides a more accurate measure of sickness absence.

11.3 Members noted the report.

Business Plan 2014/15: Progress Report  LNI 06.02.15(ii)

11.4 The Chief Executive referred to the Progress Report for the Business Plan 2014/15 and reminded Members that an update on progress is usually brought to the Board Meeting at the end of 6 months, but this year because of the announcement of in-year budget cuts in September it was decided to wait until December to report, so that the impact of the budget cuts could be assessed.

11.5 Members noted the progress report on the Business Plan 2014/15.

Corporate Risk Register  LNI 06.02.15(iii)

11.6 The Director of Business Support referred to the Corporate Risk Register and reported that it had been reviewed in detail at the last meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 21 January 2015.

11.7 Members noted that DCAL had recently suggested a new format for the Corporate Risk Register and it was proposed to assess this for use in the new financial year.
11.8 Members noted the corporate risk register.

Finance Reports (December 2014) LNI 06.02.15(iv)

11.9 The Director of Business Support presented the capital and recurrent budget reports to December 2014. He noted that the recurrent budget included the on-going savings in staff and premises costs which had allowed a one-off investment in stock, maintenance and equipment. It was noted that the increased stock budget should allow spend of approximately £2.00 per capita for the current year.

11.10 The Director of Business Support informed Members that the allocations received in November 2014 and January 2015 had been included in the capital budget and that it was expected that the capital budget would be fully spent at year end.

11.11 Members noted the reports.

12. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2015 LNI 08.02.15

12.1 In the absence of the Chairperson of the Committee, Alderman J Rodgers, the Vice-Chairperson, Mrs D Kenny, presented the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 21 January 2015.

Item 7: Internal Audit Activity Report

12.2 Seven internal audit reports had been considered by the Committee of which six had received a Satisfactory level of assurance and one a Limited level of assurance.

Item 8: Internal Audit Annual Plan 2014/15: Progress Report

12.3 The Head of Internal Audit had reported to the Committee that the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2014/15 called for the completion of 29 audit assignments during the year and, as at the date of the Committee meeting, 21 had been completed. The Committee noted that the Head of Internal Audit was reasonably confident that five more audits would be completed before the year end which would be sufficient to enable him to provide the Chief Executive, as Accounting Officer, with an opinion on the effectiveness of risk management and internal controls to inform the governance statement.

Item 12: Internal Audit Charter: Review

12.4 A revised Internal Audit Charter document had been approved by the Committee subject to the inclusion of the date for review.

Item 13: Whistleblowing

12.5 The Committee’s attention had been drawn to new guidance on Whistleblowing issued jointly by the Audit Offices in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, noting that officers would be reviewing the Libraries NI Whistleblowing Policy in light of this guidance.
Item 16: Stock Losses and Catalogue Accuracy

12.6 The Director of Business Support had briefed the Committee on work that had been done in relation to addressing stock losses and catalogue accuracy and the Committee had noted the criteria and timescales which would be set to monitor the withdrawal of stock items from the catalogue in the future.

Item 18: NIAO Issues

12.7 The NIAO had briefed the Committee on the Audit Strategy for 2014/15 and had informed Members that it was hoped to certify the Annual Accounts 2014/15 on 5 October 2015.

12.8 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson Councillor H Nicholl, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 21 January 2015.

13. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 JANUARY 2015 LNI 09.02.15

13.1 The Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, Ms A Matthews, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2015 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.


13.2 The Committee had approved the Draft Workforce Strategy 2014/15 – 2017/18.

Item 7: Report on the use of External Consultants on the e2 Project

13.3 The Committee had approved the Report on the Use of External Consultants on the e2 Project which had demonstrated that the objectives were delivered well within the budget allowed.

Item 10: Corporate Social Responsibility

13.4 It was noted that the Committee had recognised the need for the development of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) statement. It had also been recommended that in developing the new Corporate Plan, the wording under Values be changed from "nurturing staff" to "supporting and developing staff".

Item 11: Tender Report

13.5 Members had noted the tender report regarding the replacement facility for Moira Library.

Item 12: Procurement Report

13.6 Members noted that the Committee had discussed openness and transparency in relation to information disclosed on procurements. Further to discussion on the minute in relation to this item, the Chairperson of the Business Support Committee asked that it be referred back to the Committee for further clarification and discussion at its next meeting.
On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by the Vice-Chairperson of the Board, Councillor H Nicholl, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 28 January 2015 including any recommendations contained therein, with the exception of paragraphs 12.3 and 12.4 which were referred back to the Committee.

14. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

14.1 There was no other notified business.

15. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 Members noted that the next scheduled Board Meeting would take place on Thursday 23 April 2015 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library.

16. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

16.1 The meeting ended at 12:50 pm.

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

Professor B Cullen arrived at 10:52 am
Ms A Matthews arrived at 11:07 am
Councillor Mrs A Brolly left at 12:21 pm

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 23/04/2015