LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

15 October 2015

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 15 October 2015 at 10.45 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT

Professor Bernard Cullen Chairperson
Alderman Thomas Burns
Councillor Dr Janet Gray
Councillor Garath Keating
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Alderman Stephen Martin
Ms Angela Matthews
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Séan McGuigan
Councillor Stephen McIlveen
Councillor Jenny Palmer
Mr Harry Reid
Alderman Marion Smith
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 Brian Doherty Head of Internal Audit

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Alderman Tom Campbell Vice-Chairperson
Dr Margaret Ward

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. Councillor Dr J Gray informed Members that she had recently been appointed to the Board of the Northern Ireland Museums Council.
3. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

3.1 The Chairperson drew attention to the following:

- the launch of National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) ‘Out and About’ Strategy in Ormeau Road Library on 30 September 2015. He referred Members to the letter received from the DCAL Minister (Appendix 6 of the Chief Executive’s Business) stating how pleased she was by the support received from Libraries NI for the NMNI’s community engagement programme

- the ‘Two Cities, One Book’ campaign which was launched by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Criona Ni Dhàlaigh, in the Mansion House Dublin on 14 October 2015 and was attended by representatives from Dublin City Libraries and Libraries NI. The ‘Two Cities One Book’ campaign, a joint project with Dublin City Libraries will run for the month of April 2016 during which a busy programme of events would be held in library venues across Belfast and Dublin. The Chairperson thanked Alderman Tom Campbell, Vice Chairperson, for deputising for him at this event.

3.2 Members were informed that DCAL had called a meeting of the Chairpersons and Chief Executives of Arms’ Length Bodies for 29 October 2015 to discuss the Northern Ireland Audit Office Report on The Events Company.

3.3 Members were reminded that the Board and its Committees were required to undertake an effectiveness review on an annual basis. Due to the appointment of new Board Members on 1 April 2015 this process had been delayed, however it would commence for the Business Support Committee and Services Committee in November 2015 and was scheduled as an agenda item for the Board Meeting in December 2015.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

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

Assembly Questions

4.2 Members were referred to the Minister’s response to Written Assembly Questions during the period 26 June 2015 to 2 October 2015 inclusive.

ALB Strategic Forum: 29 June 2015

4.3 Members were referred to the note of the ALB Strategic Forum meeting held on 29 June 2015 which had been prepared by DCAL.

Resource Budget 2015/16

4.4 Members noted the correspondence from the Permanent Secretary dated 10 September 2015 regarding an in-year budget reduction of £350,000. A
revised budget, taking account of this reduction would be considered under Agenda Item 10.

2016/17 Voluntary Exit Scheme Funding

4.5 Members noted the correspondence from David Carson, Director of Finance, DCAL, dated 2 October 2015. This matter would be considered further under Agenda Item 11.

4.6 The Chief Executive drew attention to the correspondence from Mr D Lynn, Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), dated 1 October 2015, regarding a preliminary review of the e2 project from business case to implementation as part of the NIAO value for money work programme.

Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee

4.7 The Chief Executive reported that the Culture, Arts and Leisure (CAL) Committee had requested a briefing, at its meeting on 22 October 2015, on the outcome of the library opening hours consultation; the further in-year budget cuts; how libraries NI is working with the new Councils on community planning; and libraries as community hubs.

4.8 In response to a question from Councillor G Keating regarding Libraries NI being included as a statutory partner in community planning, the Chief Executive reported that Libraries NI had responded to the consultation on the legislation in relation to the naming of statutory partners expressing the view that it should be named, but that the outcome of that consultation had not yet been announced.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 2 JULY 2015 (LNI 01.10.15)

5.1 On a proposal by Councillor J Palmer, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, Members approved the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 2 July 2015.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 2 JULY 2015 (LNI 02.10.15)

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 3.4: Chairperson's Business

6.2 The Director of Library Services, Ms H Osborn reported on her attendance at the DCAL Transition Programme Working Group held on 9 September 2015. She explained that the workshop had been attended by representatives from DCAL's Arms' Length Bodies (ALBs) and involved facilitated discussions in groups in preparation for the Department of Communities. The Director of
Library Services explained that the workshop was an opportunity to demonstrate Libraries NI’s potential contribution to the new Department and was a useful forum for all of the ALBs to exchange ideas. It was noted that Mr Leo O’Reilly had recently been appointed as Permanent Secretary for the Department of Communities.

**Item 4.6: Chief Executive’s Business – Accountability Meeting**

6.3 Members noted that the minutes of the DCAL Accountability meeting held on 3 June 2015 had been presented to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee on 23 September 2015.

**Item 10.5: Further Budget Planning for 2015/16**

6.4 Members were reminded that at the Board Planning Day held on 17 September 2015, the Director of Library Services as part of her presentation had outlined initial thinking on the process being used to gather the information required to develop criteria for future service provision.

**Item 11.6: Libraries NI Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15**

6.5 Members noted that this item had been completed and that in future all Board and Committee documents would refer to female Councillor Members in the same format as currently used for male Councillors. Relevant staff had been informed.

**MINUTES OF THE BOARD PLANNING DAY HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015**

(LNI 03.10.15)

7.1 On a proposal by Alderman M Smith, seconded by Councillor J Palmer, Members approved the minutes of the Board Planning Day held on 17 September 2015.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE BOARD PLANNING DAY HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015**

(LNI 04.10.15)

8.1 The Chief Executive reported that there were no specific matters arising from the minutes of the Planning meeting. Officers were continuing to work to develop the high level corporate objectives based on discussion at the Planning meeting.

8.2 Further discussion, at Board level, on the draft objectives and high level targets/goals would take place at the next Board Meeting scheduled for 17 December 2015.

**LIBRARIES NI ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2014/15**

(LNI 05.10.15)

9.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15 which, as previously reported, had been approved and signed at the
Business Support Committee meeting held on 1 October 2015 in order to meet the required timescales. She reminded Members that while the Board had delegated authority to the Business Support Committee to review the Annual Report it was still important that Members had an understanding of the main issues detailed in the report and accounts and identified by the external auditors. She advised Members that the accounts had now been certified by the Comptroller and Auditor General with a clean audit certificate apart from the limitation of scope qualification regarding Heritage Assets.

9.2 The Chief Executive referred Members to the Provisional Report to Those Charged with Governance and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee’s Annual Report 2014/15 as well as the Letter of Representation which had been forwarded to Members for information.

9.3 Members noted that the Comptroller and Auditor General (C&AG) had certified the Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15 on 7 October 2015 and they would now be laid before the Assembly before being published on the Libraries NI website.

9.4 Members discussed at length the recommendation from the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) in relation to attendance by Members at Board and Committee Meetings, noting the Chairperson’s proposed approach to dealing with any sustained absenteeism in the future.

9.5 It was agreed:

- to review Standing Orders and give consideration to inclusion of a clause in relation to non-attendance of Board Members at Board and/or Committee meetings
- to consider the composition of Committees, and in particular the current position that the Chairperson of Business Support should be a member of the Services Committee and vice versa, as part of the Board Effectiveness Review to be discussed at the December Board Meeting
- that the proposed schedule of dates for Board and Committee Meetings in 2016/17 would be made available to Members at the December Board Meeting.

9.6 The Chairperson commended all those involved in the preparation of the Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15.

9.7 Members noted the report.

10. FURTHER BUDGET PLANNING FOR 2015/16 (LNI 06.10.15)

10.1 The Director of Business Support drew Members’ attention to the paper which had been circulated. He reported that correspondence had been received from DCAL dated 10 September 2015 detailing an in-year budget reduction of £350,000. This was significantly less than the 6% cut which had
been assumed in the Further Budget Planning exercise carried out in May 2015.

10.2 The Director of Business Support explained the paper in detail drawing attention to funding of £875,800 which had been received to enable the release of 19 staff under the Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES). Members noted that these employees were leaving part way through the year and accordingly in-year savings would be achieved. The Director of Business Support also explained how it was proposed to deliver the £350,000 savings noting that this would mainly be through the conservative approach adopted toward spend in the first half of the year, particularly staffing, and the stock budget and programme costs associated with the Key Service Priorities. Members noted that the budget would be reviewed again in November 2015.

10.3 Members were informed that this paper had been taken to the Business Support Committee at its meeting held on 1 October 2015 at which it had been recommended to the Board for approval.

10.4 Following discussion, on a proposal by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor J Palmer Members approved the revised budget following the Voluntary Exit Scheme (VES) exercise and in-year budget cut.

11. BUDGET PLANNING FOR 2016/17

11.1 The Director of Business Support referred Members to the correspondence, dated 2 October 2015, from David Carson, Director of Finance, DCAL regarding the submission of bids for funding from the Public Sector Transformation Fund, in support of the Voluntary Exit Scheme 2016/17. He explained that since no detailed budget information was available as yet in relation to 2016/17 the Budget Planning paper for 2016/17 was based on a number of assumptions and would be used to inform the VES bid process.

11.2 Following discussion it was agreed that Officers would continue to work on budget planning for 2016/17 and further updates would be brought to the Business Support Committee in November and the Board Meeting in December.

12. MANAGEMENT REPORT

12.1 The Chief Executive and Director of Business Support briefed the Board on the Management Report.

Key Performance Indicators Quarter 1: April to June 2015

12.2 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Key Performance Indicator (KPI) Report for Quarter 1 (April to June 2015). She commended the work that was ongoing to seek to deliver against the KPIs despite the difficult financial climate. She noted also that the release of staff in-year under the VES
process would have implications for the achievement of some KPIs going forward.

**Finance Report: August 2015**

12.3 The Director of Business Support presented the summary Recurrent Report which had been reviewed at the Business Support Committee held on 1 October 2015 and drew attention to the detailed Recurrent Net Spend Report which had been included for this Board Meeting.

12.4 Members noted, with concern, that funding had not yet been received for the capital element of the Lisburn City Library PFI. In response to questions from Members, the Chief Executive confirmed that DCAL had been made aware of the implications and that a bid had been submitted in the June monitoring round. It was not yet known whether funding would be made available. She agreed to raise this issue at the next Accountability Meeting.

**Corporate Risk Register**

12.5 The Director of Business Support drew Members’ attention to the Corporate Risk Register which had been amended following its review at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meeting held on 23 September 2015. Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had asked for the funding risk to be split into two separate risks to take account of the issue regarding the availability of funding to meet the capital element of the unitary charge for Lisburn City Library PFI.

12.6 On a proposal by Alderman S Martin, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved the revised Corporate Risk Register as at September 2015.

**Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2015)**

12.7 The Chief Executive presented the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period 1 April to 30 September 2015. Members noted that a special meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had been held prior to the Board Meeting today to scrutinise the Statement. She drew attention in particular to Section 1: Risk Management which outlined the current and new risks identified within the organisation and to those sections of the Statement where the assurance level had been identified as ‘partly’ explaining the action being taken to address these matters.

12.8 Mrs D Kenny, Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee confirmed that the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period 1 April 2015 to 30 September 2015 had been scrutinised by Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at the Special Meeting of the Committee held prior to today’s Board Meeting. At this meeting Members had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval.

12.9 On a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Ms J Williams, having exercised its challenge function and received the required assurances from the Accounting Officer, the Board was content to approve
the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 30 September 2015.

13. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 JUNE 2015 (LNI 09.10.15)

13.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2015, noting that an oral report on this meeting had been given at the last Board Meeting held on 2 July 2015. She drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

Item 9: Internal Audit Activity Report

13.2 Three Audit Reports had been considered by the Committee. Two had received a 'Satisfactory' level of assurance, the third report was a formal final report which did not require an assurance rating.

Item 10: Internal Audit Activity Report: Outstanding Recommendations

13.3 Members noted that 28 of the 38 Internal Audit Outstanding Recommendations for the period had been cleared. No Priority One recommendations remained outstanding.

Item 13: Internal Audit Strategy for Branch Libraries 2015/16

13.4 The Committee had considered the Internal Audit Strategy for Branch Libraries 2015/16 and had recommended it to the Board for approval.

13.5 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Alderman S Martin, the Board adopted the minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 24 June 2015 and, in doing so, approved the Internal Audit Strategy for Branch Libraries 2015/16.

14. MINUTES OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 23 SEPTEMBER 2015 (LNI 10.10.15)

14.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 23 September 2015. She drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

14.2 Item 7: Provisional Report to Those Charged with Governance

Members noted the update given by Ms D Carville, NIAO on the Provisional Report to those Charged with Governance 2014/15. Ms Carville had reported that although significant progress had been made in relation to the Heritage Assets, a qualification would remain in place for 2014/15. She had also confirmed that the report had contained no Priority One recommendations but four Priority Two recommendations of which three had been accepted by Senior Management and the fourth had been partially accepted by Senior Management.
14.3 **Item 8: Libraries NI Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15**
The Committee had considered the Libraries NI Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2014/15 and recommended them to the Business Support Committee for approval.

**Item 9: Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report**

14.4 The Committee had reviewed the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee 2014/15 which had been updated following completion of the audit of the Accounts and receipt of the Provisional Report to Those Charged with Governance.

**Item 10: Internal Audit Activity Report**

14.5 Since the last meeting in June 2015, the Committee had reviewed six audits and each had received a ‘Satisfactory’ level of assurance. A preliminary investigation into Branch Library Timesheets had also been considered for which an assurance rating was not required.

**Item 11: Internal Audit Activity Report: Outstanding Recommendations**

14.6 Members noted that 13 of the 17 outstanding Internal Audit recommendations for the period had been cleared. No Priority One recommendations were outstanding.

**Item 12: Internal Audit Plan 2015/16: Progress Report**

14.7 It was noted that the Committee had received an update from the Head of Internal Audit regarding progress in completing the Internal Audit Plan 2015/16.

**Item 13: Governance and Accountability Meeting: 3 June 2015**

14.8 Members had considered the minutes of the Chief Executive’s Accountability Meeting held on 3 June 2015.

**Item 14: Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure**

14.9 The Committee had considered the revised Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure which had been reviewed in light of guidance issued from DCAL and the NIAO and Audit Offices for England, Scotland and Wales and Public Concern at Work. The Committee had recommended the revised Policy and associated procedure to the Board for approval.

**Item 15: Conflicts of Interest Policy**

14.10 Members noted that the Committee had considered the new Conflicts of Interest Policy which brought together current practice from other Libraries NI documents and the recently published good practice guide from the NIAO. Members noted that the Committee had recommended the Conflicts of Interest Policy to the Board for approval.

**Item 16: Risk Management Report and Review**

14.11 The Committee had reviewed the papers on the Risk Management Report and Review and in particular the Corporate Risk Register noting that the register had been prepared when there had been an increased level of risk due to the uncertainty surrounding the level of funding for Libraries NI and
perceived budget constraints. However, now that the recurrent budget cut had been confirmed at 1.2% this level of risk has been reduced.

14.12 Members had noted also that there remained an issue with capital funding from DCAL to meet the Lisburn City Library PFI commitment. Following discussion it was agreed that the red risk in relation to capital funding should continue and therefore the recurrent and capital risks should be shown separately on the risk register.

14.13 The Committee, subject to the above amendment, had recommended the Libraries NI Risk Management Report and Review to the Board for approval.

**Item 17: Chairperson's Register of Gifts and Hospitality**

14.14 It was noted that the Committee had reviewed the Chairperson's Register of Gifts and Hospitality for the period ended 30 June 2015.

**Item 18: Schedule of Mission Critical Projects**

14.15 Members noted that the Committee had received an update on the Schedule of Mission Critical Projects by the Director of Business Support.

14.16 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Councillor J Palmer, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 23 September 2015, and, in doing so, approved the following documents:

- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures
- Conflicts of Interest Policy
- Corporate Risk Register.

15. **MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 17 SEPTEMBER 2015**

(LNI 11.10.15)

15.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Mr H Reid, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 17 September 2015 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

**Item 7: Report on Opening Hours**

15.2 Members noted that the Committee had considered the Opening Hours Report which sought approval for the proposals for the opening hours in the Mellon Centre for Migration Studies (MCMS) and for the opening hours policy document which provides information on patterns of opening hours for branches libraries following engagement with customers.

15.3 **Item 8: Libraries NI's Approach to Quality Management**

It was noted that the Committee had received a report from Ms M Bryson, Assistant Director on Libraries NI's approach to Quality Management and progress undertaken to date.
15.4 The Committee had considered the report: Ambition and Opportunity: A Strategy for Public Libraries in Scotland 2015 – 2020 and it was agreed that a web link to the full report would be issued to Members via e-mail.

15.5 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Mr H Reid, seconded by Ms J Williams, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Services Committee held on 17 September 2015 and, in doing so, approved the Report on Opening Hours.

16. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 1 OCTOBER 2015 (LNI 12.10.15)

16.1 The Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, Ms A Matthews, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 1 October 2015 and drew attention, in particular, to the undemoted items which had not been dealt with elsewhere on the agenda for the Board Meeting.

16.2 Members noted that the Committee had received a report from the Assets Manager on the Interim Asset Management Plan which had been developed to bridge the gap between the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) periods. The Committee recommended the Interim Asset Management Plan to the Board for approval.

16.3 The Chief Executive updated Members on the current position regarding the former Oldpark Library building. She reported that DCAL had been contacted by Development Trusts NI acting on behalf of Lower Oldpark Community Association requesting that the current auction process be suspended pending further investigation of the potential to transfer the surplus property for local community use. She explained the actions that had been taken in the past five years to seek to dispose of this surplus property, including working with the Lower Oldpark Community Association and the Department of Social Development. It was noted that despite these efforts no firm commitment had been received from any party and approval had been received from DCAL to proceed to public auction. Members agreed that unless a firm offer was received the auction process should continue as planned.

16.4 The Committee had considered the Libraries NI Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report 2014/15, a draft of which had already been submitted to the Equality Commission in order to meet their deadline but which was subject to Board approval.
Item 11: Discretions Policy on Pension

16.5 Members noted that the Committee had considered the Discretions Policy on Pension which had been discussed with the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers' Superannuation Committee (NILGOSC), staff and the Trades Unions.

16.6 It was noted that the Committee had also considered the Pension Policy for Staff who are Members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI). Both policies were being recommended to the Board for approval.

Item 12: Flexible Retirement Policy

16.7 The Committee had considered the Flexible Retirement Policy which had initially been approved in 2011 and which had been updated to reflect the changes made in the pensions regulations. The Committee recommended the revised policy to the Board for approval.

Item 14: Coleraine Library Redevelopment Project – Appointment of Integrated Design Team

16.8 Members noted that following a procurement exercise Hamilton Architects had been appointed to the Coleraine Library Redevelopment Project.

Item 15: Pedal Cycle Rate

16.9 Members were informed that a Pedal Cycle rate of 20p per mile would take effect from 1 April 2014.

Item 16: Sickness Absence Report

16.10 The Sickness Absence Report to August 2015 had been presented to the Committee. Members noted that the Health and Wellbeing Team was currently reviewing the Attendance Management Policy which would be brought to the Negotiating Committee and the Business Support Committee for review in due course.

Item 17: Stress Action Plan Progress Report

16.11 The Committee had received an update on the Stress Action Plan Progress Report and noted that in order to measure the success of the plan a further Stress Audit would be carried out in due course.

Item 19: 2015/16 Service Plans and Risk Registers

16.12 Members noted that the Committee had received an update on the Service Plans and Risk Registers for the Business Support Directorate.

Item 20: Procurement Report

16.13 The Committee received an update regarding Procurements for the period 16 May 2015 to 18 September 2015 and tenders/single tender actions over £1,000.

16.14 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Ms A Matthews, seconded by Alderman S Martin, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 1 October 2015 and, in doing so, approved the following documents:
• Interim Asset Management Plan 2015/16
• Libraries NI Statutory Equality and Good Relations Duties Annual Progress Report
• Discretions Policy on Pensions
• Pensions Policy for Staff who are Members of the Local Government Pension Scheme (NI)
• Flexible Retirement Policy.

17. **ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

17.1 There was no other notified business.

18. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

18.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on Thursday 17 December 2015 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

19. **MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

19.1 The meeting ended at 12.46 pm.

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

Councillor Dr J Gray left at 12 noon
Alderman T Burns left at 12.19 pm
Councillor C Mallaghan left at 12.40 pm

Signed: 

Date: 17/12/15