LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

23 April 2015

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 23 April 2015 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT

Professor Bernard Cullen
Alderman Thomas Burns
Councillor Dr Janet Gray
Councillor Ms Claire Hanna
Councillor Garath Keating
Alderman Stephen Martin
Ms Angela Matthews
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Séan McGuigan
Councillor Stephen Mclveen
Councillor Mrs Jenny Palmer
Mr Harry Reid
Alderman Mrs Marion Smith
Dr Margaret Ward
Alderman Adrian Watson
Ms Jane Williams

Chairperson

IN ATTENDANCE

Ms Irene Knox
Mr Terry Heron
Ms Helen Osborn

Chief Executive
Director of Business Support
Director of Library Services

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Councillor Tom Campbell
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan

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 the following new Members to the Libraries NI Board:

Alderman Thomas Burns  
Councillor Dr Janet Gray  
Councillor Ms Claire Hanna  
Councillor Garath Keating  
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan  
Alderman Stephen Martin  
Councillor Stephen McIlveen  
Councillor Mrs Jenny Palmer  
Alderman Adrian Watson.

3.2 The Chairperson welcomed the following Members who had been re-appointed to the Libraries NI Board:

Councillor Tom Campbell  
Councillor Séan McGuigan  
Alderman Mrs Marion Smith.

3.3 Members noted the letter received from the DCAL Minister in response to correspondence which the Chairperson had sent informing her of the Board’s decision to proceed to public consultation on the proposed Policy on Opening Hours.

3.4 Members noted the response which had been received from the Director, Local Government Policy Division, Department of the Environment, dated 31 March 2015 setting out the latest position on The Draft Local Government (Community Planning Partners) Order (Northern Ireland) 2015.

3.5 The Chairperson updated Members on the Accountability Meeting with the DCAL Minister which he had attended with the former Vice-Chairperson of the Board, Councillor H Nicholl on 30 March 2015. He reported that the meeting had been informal and the Minister had been well-informed about the various programmes and projects in which Libraries NI was engaged. There had been a useful discussion about a number of matters, including participation in activities and events that supported children’s learning such as Rhythm and Rhyme and class visits, the Health in Mind project and the redevelopment of Belfast Central Library.

4. **CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS**

4.1 The Chief Executive took the opportunity to welcome the new and returning Members to the Libraries NI Board.

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

4.3 Members were referred to the Minister’s response to Written Assembly Questions during the period 13 February 2015 to 10 April 2015 inclusive.

Lisnaskea Library

4.4 The new Lisnaskea Library opened to the public on Wednesday 8 April 2015 and has been very well received by the local community. Congratulations were extended to all of the members of staff who had been involved in the project including Mr D Miskelly, Assets Manager, Mrs M Bell, Operations Manager, Mr S Bleakley, Area Manager and Ms V Smith, Branch Library Manager. The official opening of the library would take place on Thursday 18 June 2015 to which all Members would be invited.

Accountability Meeting

4.5 The Chief Executive reported that her Accountability Meeting had taken place on 18 February 2015. The minutes of the meeting were submitted to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and discussed at its meeting held on 15 April 2015.

Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee

4.6 Members noted that the Chief Executive, the Director of Business Support and the Director of Library Services had attended a meeting of the Culture, Arts and Leisure Committee on 26 February 2015 to brief them on the Savings Delivery Plans for 2015/16.

Correspondence from Permanent Secretary, DCAL

4.7 Members noted the correspondence, dated 14 April 2015, from Mr D McMahon, recently appointed to the post of Permanent Secretary in DCAL regarding ‘Looking into the Future’.

Post-Graduate Diploma in Library and Information Management

4.8 The Chief Executive reported that four members of staff, who had received support under the Libraries NI Post-Entry Study Scheme, had recently been successful in obtaining the Post-Graduate Diploma from the Ulster University. Congratulations were extended to the members of staff concerned.

Board Members’ Induction

4.9 Members noted the dates which had been suggested for Induction Training. Unfortunately, these were not suitable and it was agreed that further dates would be circulated as soon as possible. Members also noted that there was a requirement for new Members to undertake Corporate Governance Training within six months of being appointed to the Libraries NI Board, and that possible dates for this training would also be circulated to Members.

Schedule of Meetings

4.10 Members noted the Schedule of Meetings for 2015/16.
Silver Surfers Day

4.11 The Chief Executive updated Members on Silver Surfers Day which was taking place today, 23 April 2015. She reported that this was the 11th year of Silver Surfers' Day taking place across Northern Ireland and this year 27 libraries were participating.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2015

LNI 01.04.15

5.1 On a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Dr M Ward, Members approved the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 12 February 2015.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2015

LNI 02.04.15

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 3.8: Visit to Belfast Central Library

6.2 Members noted that a visit to Belfast Central Library had been arranged for those Members who had requested it. Further visits can be arranged if required, by contacting the Chief Executive’s Office.

Item 3.9: CILIP Ireland/LAI Joint Conference

6.3 Members noted that Mr A McDowell and Ms J Williams had attended the CILIP Ireland/LAI Joint Conference held 8 – 10 April 2015.

6.4 Ms J Williams reported that she had found the Conference to be a valuable experience. She felt that the Conference had been a useful platform to showcase Libraries NI and gave a sense of the type of library service that was needed in the future.

6.5 Mr A McDowell agreed with Ms J Williams adding that he felt the Conference focused on the future of the library service and on the many positive things that libraries do. He suggested that some time should be spent on the forthcoming Induction Day focusing on the library service of the future.

Item 4.5: Chairperson’s Business

6.6 Members were reminded that an event to mark the service of former Board Members would be held on Thursday 21 May 2015 at 1:00 pm in Lisburn City Library. Mr N Macartney former Chairperson of the Board, would be attending and all Members were invited to attend.
Item 6.3: Matters Arising from the Meeting of the Board held on 11 December 2014, Draft Business Plan 2015/16

6.7 Members noted that the Draft Business Plan 2015/16 had been submitted to DCAL and as yet no response had been received.


6.8 In response to a request from Mr A McDowell the Chief Executive agreed to give consideration to piloting support for adult literacy activities, possibly in the context of Job Clubs. This would need to take account of available resources.

Item 11.7: Management Report

6.9 Members noted that this matter had been considered by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting on 15 April 2015 and following discussion the Committee had recommended to the Board that, in accordance with the guidance from DCAL the Corporate Risk Register should focus more on strategic risks and the revised risk matrix should be used. However, the Committee did not accept that the 'treated risk' section of the risk register should be removed and was of the view that reference to the risk appetite should be retained.

Item 13.6: Minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 28 January 2015

6.10 Members noted that, at its meeting on 25 March 2015, the Business Support Committee had agreed the approach in relation to release of information in respect of an awarded contract.

7. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRPERSON OF THE BOARD

7.1 The Chairperson reminded Members that Standing Orders provides that the Vice-Chairperson of the Board should be elected at the first meeting of the Board held after all Members had been appointed.

7.2 Following discussion, on a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Councillor S McIlveen, Members agreed to defer the election of the Vice-Chairperson of the Board to the July Board Meeting. It was further agreed that Members would give consideration to the length of the term of office of the Vice-Chairperson of the Board as it may be appropriate to set a two year time period in line with the term of office of Chairpersons and Vice-Chairpersons of Committees.

8. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

8.1 The Chief Executive reported that all current Members had been asked to confirm whether or not they would wish to continue to serve on their current Committee or take the opportunity to move to another Committee. New Board Members had been given copies of the Schemes of Delegation for the
Committees and had also been asked to express a preference for the Committee they wished to serve on. On a proposal by Councillor Mrs J Palmer, seconded by Councillor S McIlveen, the membership of the Committees was agreed as follows:

**Audit and Risk Assurance Committee**

Professor Bernard Cullen  
Councillor Ms Claire Hanna  
Mrs Deirdre Kenny  
Alderman Stephen Martin  
Councillor Sean McGuigan

**Business Support Committee**

Alderman Thomas Burns  
Alderman Tom Campbell  
Professor Bernard Cullen  
Councillor Garath Keating  
Ms Angela Matthews  
Mr Alastair McDowell  
Alderman Mrs Marion Smith

The Vice-Chairperson of the Board and the Chairperson of Services Committee are also members of the Business Support Committee.

**Services Committee**

Professor Bernard Cullen  
Councillor Dr Janet Gray  
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan  
Councillor Stephen McIlveen  
Councillor Mrs Jenny Palmer  
Mr Harry Reid  
Dr Margaret Ward  
Alderman Adrian Watson  
Ms Jane Williams

The Vice-Chairperson of the Board and the Chairperson of Business Support Committee are also members of the Services Committee.

9. **MANAGEMENT REPORT**

**Bi-Annual Assurance Statement October 2014 – March 2015**  

LNI 05.04.15 (i)

9.1 The Chief Executive presented the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period 1 October 2014 to 31 March 2015 and informed Members that it had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 15 April 2015.
9.2 She drew attention in particular to Section 1: Risk Management which outlined the current and new risks currently identified within the organisation.

9.3 Members noted that a draft copy of the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement had been submitted to DCAL in order to inform the Department's end of year processes on the understanding that it would remain in draft until it had been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and the Board.

9.4 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Alderman Mrs M Smith, having exercised its challenge function and received the required assurances from the Accounting Officer, the Libraries NI Board was content to approve the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 31 March 2015.

**Annual Board Assurance Statement 2014/15**

LNI 05.04.05 (ii)

9.5 The Chairperson presented the Annual Board Assurance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2015 and drew attention in particular to the Issues as outlined on page 5 of the Statement.

9.6 On a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Dr M Ward, Members approved the Chairperson’s Annual Board Assurance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2015.

**Corporate Risk Register**

LNI 05.04.15 (iii)

9.7 The Director of Business Support presented the Corporate Risk Register which had been fundamentally reviewed to take account of the key objectives in the 2015/16 draft Business Plan adding that the focus was on the strategic risks facing the organisation.

9.8 Members noted that the Corporate Risk Register had been examined in full by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 15 April 2015.

9.9 The Director of Business Support reported that DCAL had suggested a number of changes to the format of the Corporate Risk Register, however the Risk Management Group had not agreed to these changes and had recommended to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee that Libraries NI should continue to use the existing template with the addition of the revised Risk Matrix.

9.10 Members discussed the Corporate Risk Register, noting the key risks. They agreed that the Chief Executive should write to DCAL confirming that, in respect of the template being suggested by DCAL, the Board was of the view that the removal of reference to ‘treated risk’ and ‘risk appetite’ was a retrograde step and that Libraries NI would not be implementing these aspects of the template.

9.11 On a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Councillor S Martin, Members approved the Corporate Risk Register.
Finance Report (February 2015) LNI 05.04.15 (iv)

9.12 The Director of Business Support presented the capital and recurrent budget reports to February 2015. He noted that the recurrent report showed a forecasted year end underspend of £150,000 or 1.49% and the capital report showed a forecasted year end underspend of £26,000 or 0.63%.

9.13 Members noted the report.

DCAL Letter re Easements to the Libraries NI Resource and Capital Budgets 2014/15 LNI 05.04.15 (v)

9.14 Members noted the DCAL letter dated 16 April 2015 showing the easements in both Resource and Capital budgets. Members noted that the Department had adjusted budgets accordingly.

10. BUDGET 2015/16 LNI 06.04.15

10.1 The Director of Business Support reported that DCAL had now confirmed the total recurrent budget allocation for 2015/16 at £29.415 million, a 7.5% reduction on the 2014/15 base budget.

10.2 He informed Members that the draft Budget 2015/16 had been considered in detail at the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 25 March 2015 at which the Finance Manager had given a detailed presentation. He referred Members to the detailed budget, explaining that it had been prepared with involvement from budget managers and the Senior Management Team. He drew attention to some of the key budget figures and explained the assumptions that had been made in preparing the budget.

10.3 In response to questions from Members, the Director of Business Support reported that a Business Case had been submitted to DCAL for funding to facilitate the release of staff on voluntary redundancy. There was no further information available at this stage as to the amount of central funding that might be available to facilitate the release of staff, but it may be that the full cost of the voluntary redundancies would not be funded, in which case additional savings would have to be found in-year. He confirmed that this was the seventh tranche of voluntary redundancies being implemented by Libraries NI since its establishment.

10.4 Members recognised the difficult financial situation and expressed concern at the impact on service delivery. They noted that no planning figures were available in respect of budgets for future years, but that the general impression was that public sector funding would continue to decline.

10.5 The Chief Executive reminded Members that a Board Planning Day had been arranged for Thursday 17 September 2015 at which consideration would need to be given to the development of a new corporate strategy for the next five years in light, not only of the financial situation, but also developments in the delivery of public library services.
Following discussion on the budget and its implications, on a proposal by Ms J Williams seconded by Ms A Matthews, Members approved the 2015/16 budget.

**OPENING HOURS POLICY AND PROPOSALS: UPDATE ON PUBLIC CONSULTATION**

The Director of Library Services presented an overview of the consultation process on the proposed opening hours policy and its application in 2015/16. She informed Members that the consultation process had ended on 17 April 2015 with approximately 3,801 responses to the questionnaire and 23 written submissions being received. Work had commenced to collate and analyse the responses and a report would be prepared for the special Board Meeting, to be held on 13 May 2015.

In response to questions from Members she reported that the next stage of the process, following the Board’s decision on the draft policy and proposals, would be local consultation at an individual library level to ensure, as far as possible, that the pattern of opening hours best met customer needs.

Members recognised that this was a difficult time for staff. The Director of Library Services confirmed that a communication plan was in place in relation to the changes to opening hours and that there would be consultation with staff and the recognised trade unions regarding changes to working patterns.

Members noted the report.

**MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 18 MARCH 2015**

The Vice-Chairperson of the Services Committee, Mr H Reid presented the minutes of the meeting held on 18 March 2015 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

**Item 7: Service Plan 2015/16**

Members noted that the Service Plan 2015/16 had been approved by the Committee.

**Item 8: Digitisation Policy**

Members noted that the Digitisation Policy had been approved by the Committee.

**Item 9: Media Handling Policy**

The Committee approved the Media Handling Policy following the rewording of paragraph 3.6.
Item 10: Making a Difference – Targeting Social Exclusion (TSE)

It was noted that the Committee had received a presentation ‘Making a Difference, Targeting Social Exclusion’ from the TSE Project Officer Ms N Terlik. The Committee was pleased to note that there had been a 400% increase in community contacts since the TSE Project Officer had taken up post.

The Committee had also received a presentation from Mr A Lawther, Branch Library Manager, Falls Road Library on the Take 5 programme which was launched in January 2015. Falls Road Library had been identified as a neutral venue to host a number of events promoting mental well-being, many of which still continue in Falls Road Library following their initial success.


Members noted the Independent Library Report for England which had been published in December 2014 and which was presented by the Director of Library Services.

On a proposal by the Vice-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 18 March 2015 including any recommendations contained therein.

MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 MARCH 2015 LNI 09.04.15

The Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, Ms A Matthews, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 25 March 2015 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items which had not been dealt with elsewhere on the agenda for the Board Meeting.

Item 7: Sickness Absence Target 2015/16 and Report to February 2015

Members noted that an improvement of 5% had been agreed as the Sickness Absence Target during 2015/16. It was also noted that there had been an improvement in long term sickness absences but a slight increase in short and medium term absences.

Item 8: Engagement of Agency Workers Policy

It was noted that subject to amendment at point 3.5 of the Engagement of Agency Workers Policy it had been approved by the Committee.

Item 9: Smoke Free Workplace Policy (Revised)

Members noted that the Smoke Free Workplace Policy (Revised) had been approved by the Committee.

Item 10: Recurrent Maintenance Programme

Members noted that the Recurrent Maintenance Programme had been approved by the Committee.
13.6 Members noted that the Assets Manager had presented the Capital Plan 2015/16 and that it had been approved by the Committee.

13.7 Members noted that the Committee had received a progress report on the Stress Audit Action Plan.

13.8 Members noted that the Committee had received progress reports on Service Plans within the Business Support Unit.

13.9 Members noted that the Common Seal had been used on three occasions between October 2014 and February 2015. On all occasions use had been authorised by the Chief Executive and witnessed by the Assets Manager.

13.10 Members noted the update on a Licencing Agreement between Libraries NI and Belfast City Council for use of land at Holywood Arches Library.

13.11 Members noted the update regarding Procurements in relation to Fintona Library and tenders/ single tender actions over £1,000.

13.12 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Ms A Matthews, seconded by Alderman Mrs M Smith, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 25 March 2015 including any recommendations contained therein.

14. REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 APRIL 2015

14.1 The Chairperson thanked Mr A McDowell who had attended the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 15 April 2015 in order to ensure that the meeting was quorate. In the absence of both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee at today's meeting, Members were informed that Mr A McDowell would update Members on items discussed.

14.2 Mr McDowell reported that the formal minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 15 April 2015 would be available at the next Board Meeting to be held on 2 July 2015 and gave a brief report of items discussed as follows:

- four Audit Reports had been considered by the Committee and each had received a 'Satisfactory' level of assurance. The Committee had also reviewed reports of two investigations
• the Head of Internal Audit had confirmed that 52 of the 55 Internal Audit Outstanding Recommendations for the period had been cleared. No Priority One recommendations were outstanding and none were outstanding more than four months

• the Chief Executive had presented the minutes of her last Accountability meeting held on 18 February 2015

• Members had reviewed the Chief Executive’s Bi-Annual Assurance Statement

• in the absence of the Chairperson of the Board, the Chief Executive had presented the Annual Board Assurance Statement and the Committee had recommended its adoption by the Board

• the Head of Internal Audit had presented the Internal Audit Draft Annual Report advising Members that 27 of 29 planned audits had been completed and had confirmed that he was able to provide his annual assurance to the Accounting Officer

• the Chief Executive had presented the draft Governance Statement 2014/15 highlighting the Review of Effectiveness and Internal Control Divergences.

• the Head of Internal Audit had presented Strategies and Plans for the financial year 2015/16

• the Director of Business Support had presented a revised Whistleblowing Policy and procedure

• the Chief Executive had presented the draft Assurance Framework document, advising Members that development of the framework was on-going

• the Corporate Risk Register had been presented by the Director of Business Support and considered by the Committee.

14.3 Members noted the report and that the minutes would be available for the next scheduled Board Meeting.

15. **REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

15.1 Officers withdrew from the meeting.

15.2 The Chairperson briefed the Board on discussion at a meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on 25 March 2015.

15.3 Officers returned to the meeting.

16. **ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

16.1 There was no other notified business.
17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 Members noted that a special Board Meeting to consider the outcome of the public consultation on the policy on opening hours would be held on Wednesday 13 May 2015 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library.

17.2 The next scheduled Board Meeting would take place on Thursday 2 July 2015 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 with the following exceptions:

   Ms A Matthews arrived at 11:29 am

   Councillor S McGuigan left at 12:04 pm
   Alderman A Watson left at 12:33 pm

Signed: ____________________________

Date: 2/07/2015