LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 8 December 2016 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT
Professor Bernard Cullen  Chairperson
Alderman Tom Campbell  Vice-Chairperson
Councillor Dr Janet Gray
Councillor Garath Keating
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Seán McGuigan
Mr Harry Reid
Alderman Marion Smith
Dr Margaret Ward
Ms Jane Williams

IN ATTENDANCE
Ms Irene Knox  Chief Executive
Mr Desi Miskelly  Director of Business Support
Ms Helen Osborn  Director of Library Services

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE
Alderman Thomas Burns
Alderman Stephen Martin
Ms Angela Matthews

2. MEMBERS’ DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST
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 drew attention to the following matters:
3.1.1 Alderman T Campbell had submitted his resignation as Vice-Chairperson of the Libraries NI Board with immediate effect due to work pressures. Members agreed that nominations would be sought to fill this position at the next meeting of the Board to be held on 9 February 2017. Members noted the convention that the Vice-Chairperson of the Libraries NI Board is a Councillor Member. On behalf of Members the Chairperson thanked Alderman Campbell for his work during his time as Vice-Chairperson of the Board and for deputising for him at a number of events.

3.1.2 Correspondence received from the Minister for Communities, dated 28 November 2016 regarding the Public Library Standards 2015/16 Performance Results. Members noted that the Minister had also written to the Chairperson of the Committee for Communities, enclosing a copy of the report. The Board agreed to refer the report to Services Committee for consideration at its meeting in January 2017 and that the Chairperson should inform the Minister that a substantive response would be issued to him following the February Board meeting.

3.1.3 An e-mail, dated 23 November 2016, from Dr H Walker, Assistant Statistician, The Executive Office regarding the collection of monitoring information from public appointees. Members noted that, while participation was voluntary, the Public Appointments Unit within the Department for Communities (DfC) had asked all Chairpersons to encourage Board Members to complete the survey.

3.1.4 Any Members, who had not already done so were asked to complete and return their appraisal forms to the Chief Executive's Office as soon as possible.

3.1.5 Tabled correspondence from the Minister to the Chairperson, dated 5 December 2016, regarding his decision to commence a review of the organisation and function of the Department’s Arms’ Length Bodies. Members noted that a central transformation programme team had been established in the Department to undertake the review and that the Permanent Secretary would be writing to each of the Accounting Officers of the Arms’ Length Bodies to set out procedures to manage senior vacancies during the review.

3.1.6 Concern was expressed at the lack of detailed information about the terms of reference for the review and the potential impact on staff morale and motivation caused by the uncertainty that any such review would generate. Members sought clarification on the implications of the review on the recruitment process for the Chief Executive’s post which would become vacant at 1 March 2017. The Chairperson agreed to update Members on discussions with the Department in relation to this matter at the end of the meeting when officers would withdraw.
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 7 October 2016 to 25 November 2016 inclusive.

Bookweek NI 29 October – 4 November 2016

4.3 Members noted that Bookweek NI, the first joint initiative between Libraries NI and BBC Northern Ireland since the partnership agreement was signed in the late summer, had been a huge success. Highlights included a pop up books programme (Cover to Cover) each afternoon; vox pops from library users throughout the week; a ‘shelfie’ campaign; and the launch of ‘The Biggest Book Group in the Country’ on The Nolan Show. A press release had been issued by the Minister for Communities congratulating Libraries NI and BBC Northern Ireland on the success of Bookweek.

Living Knowledge Network

4.4 Attention was drawn to the leaflet which had been circulated about the Living Knowledge Network. This is a partnership between the British Library and 21 major public libraries across the United Kingdom, including Belfast Central Library as well as the National Library of Scotland and the National Library of Wales. The aim is to share resources, skills and ideas, promoting the values of libraries and reinforcing the ideas of the library as a transformative and accessible public asset.

Board Effectiveness: A Good Practice Guide

4.5 The Chief Executive referred to the tabled booklet, produced by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO). She reminded Members that the annual Board effectiveness review process would commence in February 2017.

Chief Executives’ Forum, Public Accountability and Governance for Board Members

4.6 Members noted the half-day seminar being organised by the Chief Executives’ Forum. Any Member wishing to attend should forward their name to the Chief Executive’s Office.

‘My Syria’ Exhibition

4.7 Members noted that Belfast Central Library will host a pop up exhibition entitled ‘My Syria’ on Thursday 15 December 2016 between 6.00pm and 9.00pm. The exhibition has been co-ordinated by Barnardos and involves eight of the Syrian refugee families who came to Belfast on 15 December 2015. The exhibition is aimed at showcasing their history and culture and will feature crafts, photographs etc.

Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP)

4.8 The Chief Executive reported that Ms A Adair, Assistant Director, who had been the Chairperson of CILIP Ireland for a number of years and had been
instrumental in reinvigorating the organisation had stepped down recently from the role of Chairperson. Members asked that their appreciation of the work carried out by Ms Adair be noted in the minutes.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2016
   LNI 01.12.16

5.1 On a proposal by Councillor C Mallaghan, seconded by Ms D Kenny, the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 13 October 2016 were approved.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 13 OCTOBER 2016
   LNI 02.12.16

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, noting in particular, the matters set out below, not already addressed elsewhere on the agenda or in the minutes.

Item 10: Libraries NI Annual Report and Accounts 2015/16

6.2 The Annual Report and Accounts 2015/16 had been certified on 24 October 2016 and were laid before the Northern Ireland Assembly on 18 November 2016. Copies were available at the meeting today for Members’ information.

Item 12.2: Community Planning

6.3 Members noted that the timescale by which each of the 11 Councils was to issue its draft Community Plan for consultation had slipped in some cases and it may not be possible, therefore, to bring a summary of the Libraries NI response to each of the draft Plans to the February Board Meeting, as originally envisaged. It was hoped, however, that the information would be available for the Services Committee meeting in March 2017.

Item 13.15: Management Report

6.4 Members noted that the word ‘long-term’ had been removed from paragraph 2 on page 4 of the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2016) and a revised Statement had been submitted to the Department.

Item 13.16: Management Report

6.5 A review of contracts to ensure that they had all been renewed is underway and a report would be brought to the Business Support Committee in March 2017.

7. CONSULTATION ON DRAFT PROGRAMME FOR GOVERNMENT AND DRAFT DELIVERY PLANS
   LNI 03.12.16

7.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the papers on the Consultation on Draft Programme for Government and Draft Delivery Plans. She reminded Members that at the July Board Meeting they had considered the Draft
Programme for Government (PfG) Framework which had been published for consultation and had agreed an approach to the response.

7.2 On 28 October the Programme for Government Consultation document had been published for consultation, together with a series of draft delivery plans. Members noted that the closing date for responses to this stage of the consultation was 23 December 2016.

7.3 The Chief Executive explained the documents in detail to Members, highlighting the proposed response to the draft Programme for Government and the 10 draft delivery plans, where Libraries NI can make a significant and unique contribution. She reported that officers were attending various stakeholder events being held to enable people to discuss the draft plans and meetings were also taking place with the respective Senior Responsible Owners for some of the draft plans and / or their teams. These meetings were proving useful in helping to clarify the issues that need to be addressed in responding to individual draft plans.

7.4 The Chief Executive sought:

- Board approval for submission of the proposed response to the draft Programme for Government which had been circulated; and
- delegated authority from the Board to submit responses to the relevant draft Plans as set out in Appendix 2 to the papers. The relevant responses to these draft delivery plans would be reported to the Services Committee at its meeting in January 2017.

7.5 Following discussion on a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan the Board approved for submission the response to the draft Programme for Government consultation document, subject to an amendment to the second sentence in the final paragraph which would now read as follows:

While we are committed to continuing to provide facilities that are open to, and shared by, Protestants and Catholics equally, we also want to be welcoming and accessible to all sections of the community.

7.6 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan the Board approved the proposed approach to responses to the Delivery Plans and delegated authority to the Chief Executive to respond to developments as they emerge.

8. DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2017/18: PROGRESS REPORT LNI 04.12.16

8.1 The Chief Executive reminded Members that at the Board Planning Day in September 2016, officers were authorised to begin the process of developing the 2017/18 Business Plan, taking account of a number of observations made by Members.
8.2 The Chief Executive reported that work on the Business Plan 2017/18 was still at an early stage since the draft Programme for Government (PfG) 2016-2021 is still subject to consultation and there has been no indication yet as to the budget for 2017/18. She drew attention to a range of matters that were likely to be included in the Business Plan under each of the Strategic Goals.

8.3 On a proposal by Alderman T Campbell, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, the Board confirmed its approval of the approach being taken and authorised officers to continue with the development of the Plan on the basis set out in the paper.

9. BANKING AND CREDIT CARD ARRANGEMENTS: CHANGE OF SIGNATORY LNI 05.12.16

9.1 The Chief Executive informed Members that following the retirement of Mr T Heron as Director of Business Support and the appointment of Mr D Miskelly as his successor, the Board is required to approve the change of signatory for Libraries NI's Bank Accounts with Danske Bank and Santander and to record approval in the minutes of a properly constituted Board Meeting.

9.2 Members noted that the Libraries NI Corporate Credit Card is used for online purchases such as vehicle licencing with DVA and was previously issued in Mr Heron's name and was cancelled on his retirement. The use and security of the Credit Card is subject to the controls as outlined in the Purchase-to-Pay procedures document.

9.3 The Chief Executive confirmed that the Business Support Committee had considered this matter at its meeting on 24 November 2016 and the minutes of that meeting record the Committee's recommendation to the Board that Mr D Miskelly should be approved as a signatory for the Danske and Santander bank accounts and that the Libraries NI credit card should be issued in his name.

9.4 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved Mr D Miskelly as signatory for the Libraries NI Danske Bank account to replace Mr T Heron.

9.5 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved Mr D Miskelly as signatory for the Libraries NI Santander Bank account to replace Mr T Heron.

9.6 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved that a new Libraries NI Corporate Credit Card be issued in the name of Mr D Miskelly.

9.7 The Chief Executive reported that a Dear Finance Director letter (FD) (DoF) 11/16 had been received providing guidance on the use of the Government Purchasing Card. The Finance Manager, Mrs R McNamee, was currently
reviewing the FD letter and a report would be brought to the next meeting of the Business Support Committee in January 2017.

10. MANAGEMENT REPORT

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

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Quarter 2: July to September 2016

10.2 The Chief Executive drew attention to the KPI Report for Quarter 2 (July to September 2016) noting that, overall, participation levels across the service remained high and that the majority of targets were on schedule for achievement. She drew attention, in particular to those targets which were not expected to be met by the end of the financial year, explaining the action being taken.

10.3 Members noted the KPI report.

Finance Report: October 2016

10.4 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for capital and recurrent spend to October 2016.

10.5 In respect of capital spend, the Director of Business Support reported that there had been some delay in CPD issuing the tender documents for the refurbishment of Coleraine Library and as a result £60,000 had been surrendered to the Department. It was anticipated that the tender would be awarded early in the New Year, with the contractors on site in January 2017. The Lisburn Road Library project is on site and is projected to complete by mid-2017. Members noted the additional allocations for minor works, received in August and September and the projected areas of spend.

10.6 The Director of Business Support referred to the recurrent report explaining that, as was the case each year, the budget had been repriorised mid-year in conjunction with budget managers. He highlighted, in particular, the pressure on the response maintenance budget, mainly as a result of reduced expenditure over the past few years in respect of planned maintenance.

10.7 Members noted the finance reports.

Business Plan 2016/17: Update

10.8 The Chief Executive drew attention to the mid-year progress report on the Business Plan 2016/17, noting that some targets would not be achieved, mainly due to resourcing issues.

10.9 In response to a question from Ms J Williams the Chief Executive confirmed that 14 staff would be leaving in 2016/17 under the Voluntary Exit Scheme.
10.10 The Chief Executive informed the Board that confirmation had been received in correspondence from Ms A Cosgrove, DfC, dated 5 December 2016 of an allocation of capital funding (£286,000) from the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) to take forward the ‘Out of Hours Libraries’ project in six libraries, which was one of the targets in the 2016/17 Business Plan. Further discussions would take place with both DfC and DAERA on the profiling of this budget over two financial years and reports would be brought to both Services Committee and Business Support Committee in due course.

11. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK Assurance Committee HELD ON 12 OCTOBER 2016 LNI 07.12.16

11.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny, presented the minutes of the special meeting held on 12 October 2016 noting that an oral report on this meeting had been given at the last Board Meeting held on 13 October 2016.

11.2 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the special meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 12 October 2016.

12. MINUTES OF THE INAUGURAL MEETING OF THE BELFAST CENTRAL LIBRARY COMMITTEE HELD ON 9 NOVEMBER 2016 LNI 08.12.16

12.1 The Chairperson congratulated Mr A McDowell on his election as Chairperson of the Belfast Central Library Committee. Mr McDowell presented the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Committee held on 9 November 2016, and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 3: Election of Vice-Chairperson

12.2 Dr M Ward had been elected Vice-Chairperson of the Belfast Central Library Committee. Mr McDowell explained that because of the current membership of the Committee (i.e. none of the Members were Councillors) both the Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson were independent Members which was a deviation from Standing Orders.

Item 6: Scheme specifying the duties and responsibilities of the Committee

12.3 The Committee had considered the draft Scheme and was recommending it to the Board for adoption.

Item 7: Project Management Structure

12.4 Members noted that the Director of Business Support had briefed Members on the proposed Project Management structure for the Belfast Central Library Re-development project.
Item 9: Project Update Report

12.5 The Director of Business Support reported that, since the meeting of the Committee, he had met with Ms D Stockman from DfC regarding specialist legal advice in relation to procurement routes. Ms Stockman had agreed to seek advice from the Strategic Investment Board (SIB). When a response has been received it will be shared with Board Members.

Item 10: Project Risk Register (Development Phase)

12.6 The Committee had noted the Project Risk Register (Development Phase).

12.7 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the inaugural meeting of the Belfast Central Library Committee held on 9 November 2016.

12.8 On a proposal by Alderman T Campbell, seconded by Ms J Williams, the Board approved the deviation from Standing Orders in relation to the position of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Committee.

12.9 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Ms J Williams, the Board approved the Scheme of Delegation for the Belfast Central Library Committee.

13. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2016

13.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Mr H Reid, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 16 November 2016 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 7: Reading and Reader Development Policy

13.2 The Committee had recommended the revised Reading and Reader Development Policy to the Board for approval noting that some minor amendments had been made to it so that the wording better reflects the contribution that reading makes to the Programme for Government outcomes.

Item 8: Service Plan Progress Report and Risk Register 2016/17

13.3 The Committee had noted the Service Plan Progress Report and Risk Register 2016/17.

Item 9: Marketing and Promotion of Libraries NI

13.4 The Committee had received a report on the Marketing and Promotion of Libraries NI from Mr G Beattie, Head of Strategic Marketing and Communication. It was agreed that the Head of Marketing should alert the Committee to stories and events that would be particularly useful for them to promote. The Committee had recognised the constraints on the marketing budget and agreed that the option of including creative activities which produce marketing collateral should be included in external funding bids.
Item 10: Working with People who are Homeless and with Refugees

13.5 The Committee had received a report on Working with People who are Homeless and with Refugees from Operations Managers Ms H Poston and Ms L Buick.

13.6 The Committee had reinforced the need to capture the impact of such work to assist in the Outcome Based Accountability approach and felt that the Indicator in the draft Programme for Government relating to shared space did not adequately reflect this type of work. Committee Members had reiterated the view expressed previously by the Board that the proposed indicator i.e. 'the percentage of people who think leisure centres, parks, libraries and shopping centres are 'shared and open' to both Protestants and Catholics' should be extended to include the percentage of people who think that these spaces are shared, open and welcoming to all sections of the community.

Item 11: Customer Feedback Report

13.7 The Committee had noted the Customer Feedback Report for the period April to September 2016.

Item 12: Any Other Business

13.8 Members noted that an informal working group consisting of the Chairperson of the Committee and Ms J Williams had met to consider how evidence could be collated to support the Outcome Based Accountability approach. The Chairperson summarised their thinking to date which would be discussed in more detail at the next meeting of the Services Committee.

13.9 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Mr H Reid, seconded by the Vice-Chairperson Councillor Dr J Gray, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Services Committee held on 16 November 2016.

13.10 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Mr H Reid, seconded by the Vice-Chairperson Councillor Dr J Gray, the Board approved and adopted the revised Reading and Reader Development Policy.

14. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2016 LNI 10.12.16

14.1 The Chairperson congratulated Alderman M Smith and Mr A McDowell on being elected as Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee respectively.

14.2 The Chairperson of the Business Support Committee Alderman M Smith, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2016 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 8: Belfast Central Library Redevelopment Project: Update

14.3 The Committee had noted that given the delays in obtaining funding to take the project forward, the Belfast Central Library Committee may not have
sufficient business in the short term to merit a regular meeting schedule and, in the interim, the project development report would remain as a standing item on the Business Support Committee agenda.

**Item 9: e2 Replacement Plan: Update**

14.4 Members had received a report from the Head of ICU/ICT regarding the ongoing work on the e2 Replacement Plan. The Head of ICU/ICT had confirmed that contact had been made with the Department to identify a process for obtaining formal approval to extend the current contract through to the 2019/20 financial year, and indicated that the existing e2 ICT infrastructure would be sustainable until then without any significant technical refresh. The Committee had noted that the next stage would be to develop the relevant e2 replacement business case(s).

**Item 10: Procurement Policy Review**

14.5 The Committee had reviewed the revised Procurement Policy and recommended it to the Board for approval.

**Item 12: 2016/17 Service Plan Progress Reports**

14.6 The Committee had received updates in relation to Service Plans and Risk Registers for the Business Support Directcrate to include Assets, Finance, Human Resources and ICU/ICT.

**Item 13: Recurrent Maintenance Programme 2016/17: Progress Report**

14.7 The Committee had received an update on the delivery of the planned maintenance programme for 2016/17 and noted that any works which had not been completed during the 2016/17 financial year would go forward as projects for consideration in the 2017/18 maintenance programme.

**Item 15: Sickness Absence Report to October 2016**

14.8 The Committee had received an update from the Human Resources Manager on the Sickness Absence Report to October 2016. She had reported that improvements had been made in zero, short term and medium term absence but that the proposed reduction in long-term sickness absence was unlikely to be achieved. She confirmed that the Health and Wellbeing Team was continuing to provide support to managers in relation to sickness absence and to those on long-term sick leave.

**Item 16: Procurement Reports**

14.9 The Committee had received a report regarding procurements for the period 10 September 2016 to 14 November 2016 and a report on Single Tender Actions during the same period.

14.10 The Director of Business Support had informed the Committee of new procedures which had just been received from the Department for Communities in relation to Direct Award Contracts (also known as Single Tender Actions) and further information would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee in January 2017.
Item 17: Customer Feedback Report

14.11 The Committee had noted the Customer Feedback Report for the period April to September 2016 and had agreed to take forward a proposal that clear definitions be established as to what constitutes a comment, compliment and a complaint.

14.12 On a proposal by Alderman M Smith, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 24 November 2016.

14.13 On a proposal by Alderman M Smith, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved and adopted the revised Procurement Policy.

15. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS: APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018

LNI 11.12.16

15.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the proposed Schedule of Meetings for the period April 2017 to March 2018. She said that every effort would be made to adhere to the Schedule although it may be necessary to make amendments depending on business need.

15.2 On a suggestion by the Chairperson of the Services Committee Mr H Reid, it was agreed to amend the date of the Services Committee from 21 September 2017 to 14 September 2017. The meeting of the Services Committee would commence at 1.00 pm after the Board Planning session scheduled for the morning.

16. STAFFING MATTER

16.1 Officers withdrew from the meeting.

16.2 The Chairperson updated Members on the recruitment process for a replacement Chief Executive, in light of the impending review of Arms Length Bodies and the imposition of vacancy control.

16.3 After discussion, the Board agreed that the Chairperson would write again to the Permanent Secretary of the Department for Communities outlining the case for permission to proceed with the recruitment process forthwith, notwithstanding the general vacancy control, and emphasising the urgency of the request.

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 9 February 2017 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

19. **MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

19.1 The meeting ended at 12.55 pm.

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

- Councillor G Keating left at 11.45 am
- Councillor S McGuigan left at 12.38 pm

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 23/02/2017