LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority
Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 13 April 2017 at 10:35 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT
Professor Bernard Cullen Chairperson
Alderman Thomas Burns
Councillor Dr Janet Gray
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Donal Lyons
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Ms Angela Matthews
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Stephen Mclveen
Mr Harry Reid
Alderman Marion Smith
Dr Margaret Ward
Councillor Billy Webb
Ms Jane Williams

IN ATTENDANCE
Ms Helen Osborn Acting Chief Executive
Mr Desi Miskelly Director of Business Support
Ms Adrienne Adair Assistant Director
Mr Fergus Devitt Director, Active Communities Division
Department for Communities

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE
Alderman Tom Campbell
Councillor Garath Keating
Alderman William Leathem
Alderman Stephen Martin
Councillor Seán McGuigan

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 welcomed:

- the three new Board Members who had been appointed to the Board of Libraries NI from 1 March 2017 i.e. Councillor Donal Lyons, Councillor Billy Webb and Alderman William Leathem (apology given)
- Mr Fergus Devitt, Director, Active Communities Division, Department for Communities (DfC)
- Miss Caomhhe Matthews who was on work experience with her Aunt, Ms A Matthews and attending the Board Meeting as an observer

3.2 The Chairperson reported that in lieu of a retirement gift the former Chief Executive Ms I Knox had asked that money be donated to MacMillan Cancer. To date the sum of £330.00 had been donated and the money will be forwarded to MacMillan Cancer within the next few weeks.

*Members agreed to take Agenda Item 9: Draft Business Plan 2017/18: Update as the next order of business*

4. **DRAFT BUSINESS PLAN 2017/18: UPDATE**

4.1 The Acting Chief Executive drew attention to the third draft of the Business Plan targets for 2017/18, noting that charges made since the document was last reviewed by Members has been highlighted for their information.

4.2 She reported that the Business Plan would continue to be refined as and when relevant information became available but that it was difficult to predict timescales for this.

4.3 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board approved the third draft of the Business Plan 2017/18 and agreed that, in the event of minor amendments being required, delegated authority should be given to the Chairperson to approve minor amendments in the absence of a scheduled Committee meeting taking place.

*Members agreed to take Agenda Item 10: Spending Plan 2017/18: Update as the next order of business*

5. **SPENDING PLAN 2017/18: UPDATE**

5.1 The Director of Business Support drew Members’ attention to the Spending Plan 2017/18: Update informing them that the overall savings requirement was very similar to that shown in the paper considered at the special Board Meeting held on 16 March 2017.
5.2 The Director of Business Support drew attention to the Savings Delivery Plans which showed the amount of savings to be made from the proposed reductions in the following budgets: stock, planned maintenance, staffing costs (including reducing agency expenditure) and miscellaneous. He noted the impact the savings would have on front line services together with the key risks involved in implementing the savings.

5.3 Members discussed the proposed Spending Plan and the Savings Delivery Plans and expressed concern about the impact on customers, services and staff. It was agreed that communications would need to be handled very carefully.

5.4 It was suggested that additional information should be included in the Savings Delivery Plans.

5.5 The Acting Chief Executive drew attention to paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of the Spending Plan which suggested an approach to implementing savings in relation to agency staff. She recognised that the reduced budget would lead to ad hoc closures and outlined a number of principles that could be applied to reduce the impact:

- opening hours would be reduced at the times when there are fewest customers
- proximity to other libraries would be taken into consideration
- Libraries in Opening Hours Bands 7 and 8 (18 and 25 hours per week) would be permitted to close for no more than four additional days per month and those in Bands 1 - 6 (54 - 28 hours per week) for no more than five additional days per month
- within programming, priority would be given to Core and Regular programmes which have high participation levels, high relevance to government priorities and relatively low staff input
- where possible advance notice would be given of closures.

5.6 In response to a question from Councillor B Webb the Acting Chief Executive stated that although Libraries NI did not use 'on call' staff as such, additional hours were offered to part-time staff.

5.7 The Acting Chief Executive also drew attention to the proposal at paragraph 4.8 of the Spending Plan in relation to Summer Opening Hours. This proposed that a reduction of two hours per week be implemented in the majority of libraries in Opening Hours Bands 1 – 6 and that libraries in Bands 7 and 8 be allowed to close for up to two weeks over the summer months. She reported that this was a more structured approach than ad hoc closures and would allow advance notice to be given to customers. It also recognised that patterns of library use during the summer holiday period differ from those at other times of the year.

5.8 Members discussed the Summer Opening Hours proposal and, although some Members could see benefit in having a structured approach to library
closures for a specified period of time, concern was expressed. It was agreed that libraries in Bands 7 and 8 should be allowed to close for one week over the summer months rather than two weeks.

5.9 In response to a question from Mr A McDowell, Mr F Devitt, DfC confirmed that when the Executive was reconstituted a budget for Northern Ireland would be agreed and allocated to each of the Departments. Following the appointment of the Departmental Ministers, budgets would be allocated to each Arm's-Length Body (ALB). Mr Devitt added that the current 5% saving was an estimate at present and although the full budget for Libraries NI could be re-instated, equally a deeper cut could be imposed. Mr Devitt added that the Department recognised the importance of Libraries NI and stated that a good working relationship existed between the two organisations and he would be keen for this to continue. Mr Devitt thanked Members for the opportunity to speak to them today and said he would be happy to attend a future Board Meeting.

5.10 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Mrs A Matthews and with great reluctance the Board approved the revised Spending Plan 2017/18.

5.11 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan and with great reluctance the Board approved the Savings Delivery Plans, subject to further information being included.

5.12 On a proposal by Ms J Williams, seconded by Councillor Dr J Gray, the Board agreed the approach to implement savings in relation to agency staff as outlined in paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 of the Spending Plan.

5.13 On a proposal by Ms A Matthews, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board approved the proposal in paragraph 4.8 of the Spending Plan in relation to Summer Opening Hours, subject to the amendment outlined at 5.8.

5.14 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board agreed that in the event of minor amendments being required to the Spending Plan 2017/18, delegated authority should be given to the Chairperson to approve minor amendments in the absence of a scheduled Committee meeting taking place.

5.15 The Acting Chief Executive impressed upon Members the confidentiality and sensitivity of the issues discussed. She advised that staff and Trade Unions would be informed of the Board's decision and it was agreed that a copy of the Press Release would be sent to Board Members for information.

Members agreed to return to Agenda Item 4: Acting Chief Executive's Business
6. ACTING CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

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

Senior Staffing Changes in the Department for Communities

6.2 Members were informed of a number of changes to the Senior Management Team structure in the Department for Communities.

NICS Live

6.3 Members were informed that Libraries NI has been selected to present at NICS Live, a staff engagement event for Civil Servants on 24 May 2017 in the Waterfront, Belfast. The theme of the session will be ‘Using libraries to connect the NICS to communities’.

6.4 Shining a Light
The Acting Chief Executive referred to the tabled paper ‘Rise in Library Use in Northern Ireland’, part of a major new study published on 10 April 2017 by the Carnegie UK Trust which revealed trends in library use across the UK and Ireland. Research was conducted with over 10,000 people and it is the only research on public libraries that enables comparisons to be drawn between the jurisdictions of the UK and Ireland. Members agreed that the Services Committee would look at this report in more detail.

Creativity Month 2017

6.5 It was noted that Libraries NI celebrated Creativity Month with an exciting programme of creative residencies and events for all ages. The programme aimed to celebrate cultural diversity and creativity and was supported by funding from the Department for Communities ‘Together: Building a United Community’ initiative.

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2017

LNI 01.04.17

7.1 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 23 February 2017 were approved with the following amendment at paragraph 2.2 on page 2:

*The Chairperson confirmed that he had responded to Ms Matthews stating that in his opinion a conflict of interest would be unlikely to exist but that her change in employment would be noted.*

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 23 FEBRUARY 2017

LNI 02.04.17

8.1 The Acting 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 3.1.2: Chairperson's Business**

8.2 Members noted that all Appraisal forms had now been received and this action was completed.

**Item 4.5: Chief Executive's Business, Whistleblowing**

8.3 Members noted that the Libraries NI Whistleblowing Policy and Guidance had been considered at the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 12 April 2017.

**Item 8.4: Revised Management Statement and Financial Memorandum**

8.4 Members noted that the Revised Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) had been approved by the Department of Finance (DoF) and has now been officially signed by the Acting Chief Executive and the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Communities, Mr L O’Reilly.

9. **MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 16 MARCH 2017**

9.1 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Alderman M Smith, the minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 16 March 2017 were approved.

10. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 16 MARCH 2017**

10.1 The Acting 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 3.4: The Boardroom Apprentice Scheme**

10.2 Members noted that no further information regarding The Boardroom Apprentice Scheme was currently available.

**Item 4.2: Budget 2017/18**

10.3 Members noted that this item had been completed and spending proposals had been submitted to the Department as requested by 24 March 2017.

**Item 4.5.4: Budget 2017/18**

10.4 It was noted that this item had been discussed at paragraph 5.5 above.

**Item 5.5: Draft Business Plan 2017/18**

10.5 It was noted that this item had been discussed at paragraph 4 above.
11. BOARD AND COMMITTEE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW  LNI 07.04.17

11.1 The Acting Chief Executive reminded Members that at the Board Meeting in December 2016 they had received a copy of ‘Board Members’ Effectiveness A Good Practice Guide’ produced by the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO), noting that Chapter 5 of the Guice indicates that a Board should undertake an evaluation of its effectiveness annually. She also reminded Members of the previously circulated DAO (DoF) 10/16: Key Lessons Learned from the NIAO report and PAC Hearing into the Northern Ireland Events Company (NIEC) which reinforces the finding of the Public Accounts Committee that those serving on Boards should consider the lessons learned from the NIEC and ‘especially those relating to the effectiveness of Board and Chairs’.

11.2 She referred Members to the checklist which had been circulated, reminding them that it should be seen as a starting point only as there may be other issues that the Board collectively or Members individually may wish to have considered. She also drew attention to the draft Action Schedule which had been circulated outlining actions arising from the effectiveness reviews which had been carried out by the Committees.

11.3 Members considered the checklist and collectively completed it and submitted it to the Acting Chief Executive.

11.4 It was noted also that, at its meeting in January 2017, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had completed an effectiveness review using the National Audit Office Self-Assessment Checklist and was content that it was complying with good practice.

11.5 On a proposal by Councillor S McIvor, seconded by Alderman T Burns, Members approved the Board Effectiveness Review Action Plan which combined the actions arising from all of the reviews.

11.6 The Chairperson thanked Members for participating in the Effectiveness and Compliance Reviews and especially those Members who had taken notes of the discussions.

12. MANAGEMENT REPORT  LNI 08.04.17

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

Bi-Annual Assurance Statement: October 2016 – March 2017

12.2 The Acting Chief Executive presented the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 31 March 2017 and referred in particular to Section 3: Risk Management which outlined existing risks within the organisation and new risks which had been identified. The Acting Chief Executive also reported on those areas which had been marked ‘Working towards Compliance’.
12.3 Members noted that a copy of the draft Assurance Statement had been forwarded to DfC at their request. Following discussion and review at today’s Board Meeting a signed version of the document incorporating any changes agreed by Members, would be forwarded to DfC.

12.4 The Acting Chief Executive reported on an issue which had arisen after the Assurance Statement had been circulated regarding Coleraine Library. Tenders had been issued earlier in the year and submitted to the Department for approval before Libraries NI entered into a contract for the redevelopment of the library. Unfortunately, the timing of submission of the tenders co-incided with the dissolution of the Assembly and consequently the contract is still awaiting departmental approval. In the interim Libraries NI had taken out a lease for a year for temporary accommodation while the project was being carried out. The Acting Chief Executive explained that DfC were doing their best to resolve the issue but the tender submitted by the contractor would expire on 13 April 2017 at which time the price quoted may no longer be available. Mr F Devitt, DfC replied that he hoped a decision from the Department would be available very soon.

12.5 Mrs D Kenny, Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee confirmed that the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period 1 October 2016 to 31 March 2017 had been scrutinised by Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at the meeting of the Committee held on 12 April 2017. Members had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval.

12.6 On a proposal by Alderman T Burns, seconded by Mr A McDowell, 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 31 March 2017.

Annual Board Assurance Statement 2016/17

12.7 The Chairperson presented the Annual Board Assurance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2017 noting that it had been scrutinised by Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 12 April 2017. At this meeting Members had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval.

12.8 The Chairperson drew attention to items 14 and 15 on the Statement which related to the Board and Committee Effectiveness Review, confirming that these items had now been completed.

12.9 Members noted that a draft copy of the Annual Board Assurance Statement had been submitted to DfC as requested to inform its end of year processes.

12.10 On a proposal by Alderman M Smith, seconded by Dr M Ward, Members approved the Chairperson’s Annual Board Assurance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2017.
Corporate Risk Register

12.11 The Director of Business Support drew attention to the Corporate Risk Register explaining that at the Accounting Officer’s last Accountability Meeting with the Department it had been suggested reducing the number of risks contained in the register. As a result the register had been substantially revised and a number of risks had been reduced. The Director of Business Support discussed each risk in detail and drew particular attention to Risk 5: Resources and Risk 6: Planning. These relate to the current uncertainty in relation to the political situation and lack of firm information regarding budgets.

12.12 Members noted that a draft copy of the Corporate Risk Register had been submitted to DfC.

12.13 Mrs D Kenny, Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee confirmed that the Corporate Risk Register had been considered by Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at the meeting of the Committee held on 12 April 2017. Members had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval.

12.14 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Ms A Matthews, Members approved the Corporate Risk Register.

Finance Report: March 2017

12.15 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for Capital and Recurrent spend to March 2017.

12.16 In respect of the Capital Report the Director of Business Support confirmed that the Department had agreed to accept the surrender of monies in the sum of £138,000 arising from delays in implementing projects for the Coleraine Library, the Lisburn Road Library and some minor works. He confirmed that the projected capital allocation would be fully spent at year end.

12.17 In respect of the Recurrent Report the Director of Business Support confirmed that the stock budget had benefited from additional resources released in March as a result of the internal re-profiling of budgets. This had supported some additional stock procurement ahead of the need to implement 2017/18 savings plan and it was projected that there would be a small underspend in the overall 2016/17 resource budget falling well within the permitted 1% variance limit.

12.18 Members noted the update on the Management Report.
13. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 MARCH 2017
   LNI 09.04.17

13.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Mr H Reid presented the minutes of the meeting held on 16 March 2017 and drew attention, in particular, to the undernoted items.

Item 4: Officers’ Business

13.2 The Committee had noted an invitation from the Carnegie UK Trust for a representative of Libraries NI to join a group of stakeholders on a study trip to New York in relation to the role of libraries in relation to privacy. The purpose of the trip is to explore facilitating and advocating for citizen’s online data privacy and freedom of expression

Item 6: Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Services Committee held on 16 March 2017

13.3 It was noted that this was Mr H Reid’s last meeting as Chairperson of the Committee and that Councillor Dr J Gray would take over as Chairperson at the next meeting to be held on 18 May 2017. Members thanked Mr Reid for his service and contribution to the Committee during his term as Chairperson.

Item 7: Safeguarding

13.4 The Committee had considered the Safeguarding Policy and had recommended it to the Board for approval.

Item 8: Draft Service Plan 2017/18

13.5 Members noted that the Committee had received an update on the draft Service Plan 2017/18. The Draft Service Plan was aligned to the draft Business Plan and had been developed in the same environment of uncertainty about budgets, the draft Programme for Government and Departmental priorities and is therefore an initial draft. The Services Risk Register would be brought to the next meeting of the Committee together with an updated Service Plan. Following discussion of the draft Services Plan 2017/18 the Committee agreed to recommend to the Board that a record should be kept of changes made to the targets for core and regular activities over the years and the rationale for the changes.

Review of Effectiveness of Services Committee

13.6 The Committee had considered and completed the checklist for the Committee Effectiveness Review and had also considered the draft Scheme of Delegation for the Committee and agreed to recommend approval of the Scheme of Delegation to the Board. A copy of the Committee’s completed checklist was submitted for the information of Board Members.

13.7 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 meeting of the Services Committee held on 16 March 2017.
13.8 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Mr H Reid, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved and adopted the Safeguarding Policy.

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 Draft Service Plan 2017/18 and in doing so agreed that a record should be kept of changes made to the targets for core and regular activities over the years and the rationale for these changes.

14. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 MARCH 2017

14.1 In the absence of the Chairperson of the Committee, the Vice-Chairperson Mr A McDowell presented the minutes of the meeting held on 30 March 2017 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 4: Director’s Business

14.2 The Committee had noted that the Business Case for Enniskillen Library had been submitted to the Department. A number of comments had been received from the Departmental Economists and to which Libraries NI would respond. The Committee would be kept informed of developments.

Item 5: Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 30 March 2017

14.3 The Committee had noted the revised 2017/18 Fees and Charges, which indicated an increase in the fee for interlibrary loans from £5.00 to £7.00 which had been approved by the Department.

Item 7: Committee Effectiveness Review

14.4 The Committee had completed a review of their effectiveness and while the overall assessment was positive, some issues were highlighted and noted for action or future monitoring. A copy of the Committee’s assessment was submitted for the information of Board Members.

Item 8: Belfast Central Library Redevelopment Project - Update

14.5 It was noted that the Assets Manager had advised the Committee that the lack of clarity in regard to capital funding for the 2017/18 financial year had resulted in effective suspension of the development of the project. He added that the Department had been advised of the strategic importance of the project continuing.

Item 9: e2 Replacement Plan – Update Report

14.6 The Committee had received an update from the Head of ICU/ICT on the progress in relation to the e2 replacement plan, noting that the main priority currently would be submitting an addendum to the e2 Final Business Case to the Department for approval of a contract extension.
Item 10: 2017/18 Budget
14.7 It was noted that this item had been dealt with at paragraph 5 above.

Item 11: Recurrent Maintenance Programme 2017/18
14.8 Members noted the update from the Assets Manager in relation to the Recurrent Maintenance Programme 2017/18, which in the absence of an agreed budget had been developed on the basis of an assumed reduction in the planned maintenance allocation. It had been agreed that the order of the activities presented in the programme should be arranged to reflect that Statutory Requirements take precedence over other activities.

Item 12: Proposed change to the format for presentation of Business Support related Service Plans and Risk Registers 2017/18
14.9 The Committee had agreed that from 2017/18 Officers would report to the Committee by way of a single Service Plan and Risk Register combining information from the four areas of operation for Business Support (Assets, Finance, Human Resources and ICU).

Item 13: 2016/17 Service Plan Progress Reports
14.10 It was noted that the Committee had received an update on the Service Plans for 2016/17 for each of the four areas of operation within Business Support ie Assets, Finance, Human Resources and ICU.

Item 14: Finance Reports
14.11 It was noted that this item had been dealt with at paragraphs 12.14 – 12.16 above.

Item 15: Sickness Absence Report
14.12 The Committee had received a report from the HR Manager regarding the Sickness Absence Report to February 2017. She had confirmed that a target had now been set by the Board to reduce overall sickness absence by 3% on the 2016 calendar year performance and to increase zero incidents of absence by 3% on the 2016 calendar year performance. The HR Manager had confirmed that for the first two months of the monitoring period the anticipated reductions in sickness absence had not been achieved and confirmed that Managers were continuing to monitor and manage sickness absence on a case by case basis.

Item 16: Procurement Reports
14.13 The Committee had received a report regarding procurements for the period 14 January 2017 to 20 March 2017 and a report on Single Tender Actions during the same period.

Item 17: Use of the Government Procurement Card in Libraries NI
14.14 It was noted that the Committee had received an update on the use of the Government Procurement Card and that, although there may be benefits to Libraries NI in using the card, a more intensive investigation of the process is required.
Item 18: Report on the Use of the Common Seal

14.15 It was noted that the Common Seal of the Northern Ireland Library Authority had been applied on four occasions in the period December 2016 to March 2017, having been authorised by the Chief Executive and / or Acting Chief Executive and witnessed by the Assets Manager.

Item 19: Review of Smoke Free Workplace Policy

14.16 The Committee had considered the revised Smoke Free Workplace Policy and recommended it to the Board for approval.

Item 20: Coleraine Library Tender Report

14.17 The Committee had received a report from the Assets Manager on the refurbishment and construction works tender for Coleraine Library. Following the procurement process and evaluation of the quality and commercial aspects of the submissions the most economically advantageous tender was selected and was recommended to the Board for approval.

14.18 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee Mr A McDowell, seconded by Alderman T Burns, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 30 March 2017.

14.19 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee Mr A McDowell, seconded by Alderman T Burns the Board approved and adopted the Recurrent Maintenance Programme 2017/18.

14.20 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee Mr A McDowell, seconded by Alderman T Burns the Board approved and adopted the revised Smoke Free Workplace Policy.

14.21 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee Mr A McDowell, seconded by Alderman T Burns the Board approved and adopted the Coleraine Library Tender Report.

15. REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 APRIL 2017

15.1 Mrs D Kenny, Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee reminded Members that a meeting of the Committee had been held on 12 April 2017, the formal minutes of which would be available at the next Board Meeting on 6 July 2017. Mrs D Kenny gave a brief report of items discussed as follows:

- prior to the Committee meeting, the annual bi-lateral meeting had taken place with the Head of Internal Audit to discuss, risk, control and governance. The Head of Internal Audit had given the Committee his assurance on these matters and had confirmed that there had been no impairment to the independence of Internal Audit and that appropriate resources and support were in place to facilitate Internal Audit to carry out its responsibilities
seven Internal Audit Reports had been considered by the Committee including audits relating to Validation of Targets and Business Case Processes. Neither audit had received any Priority One findings. The Head of Internal Audit confirmed that a review audit of Validation of Targets, scheduled in the Internal Audit Strategy for 2018/19 would be advanced to the current financial year if testing at branch library level indicated that the issue of audit trails to support the reporting of targets remained a concern. He also reported that two of the audits of branch libraries had contained a Priority One finding in relation to Health and Safety issues. He confirmed that the recommendations suggested had been implemented or were in the process of being implemented

- the Internal Audit Annual Report had been presented to the Committee. The Head of Internal Audit had confirmed that sufficient work had been completed during the year to allow him to provide a satisfactory opinion on the risk, control and governance framework in Libraries NI
- the Acting Chief Executive’s Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 31 March 2017 had been reviewed and the Committee had been content to recommend it to the Board
- the first draft of the Governance Statement had been considered and noted
- the Annual Board Assurance Statement for the year ended 31 March 2017 had been considered and the Committee had been content to recommend it to the Board
- the Internal Audit Strategy 2017/20, the Internal Audit Strategy for Branch Libraries 2017/18 and the Internal Audit Annual Plan 2017/18 had been considered and would be recommended to the Board for approval
- the following revised documents: Anti-Fraud Policy, Fraud Response Plan, Code of Conduct for Board Members, Conflicts of Interest Policy and Whistleblowing Policy and Procedures had been considered and would be recommended to the Board for approval
- the completed Audit Committee Self-Assessment Checklist had been reviewed and based on the results the Committee was content to provide assurance to the Board as to its effectiveness.

15.2 Mrs D Kenny informed Members that this was her last meeting as Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and thanked both Members and Officers for their help and guidance during her term. She reported that Councillor S McGuigan would take over as Chairperson at the next meeting of the Committee to be held on 21 June 2017.

15.3 Members noted the report.
16. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

16.1 The Chairperson thanked Mrs D Kenny and Mr H Reid for their work during their term as Chairpersons of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and Services Committee respectively, adding that he looked forward to working with the new Chairpersons of the Committees in the near future.

16.2 There was no other notified business.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 The next scheduled meeting of the Board will take place on Thursday 6 July 2017 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

18. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

18.1 The meeting ended at 12.42 pm.

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

Councillor B Webb left at 11.28 am
Mr F Devitt left at 11.54 am

Signed: ____________________________  
Date: 6/07/17