LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 12 December 2019 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT

Professor Bernard Cullen Chairperson
Mr Neil Bodger
Alderman Thomas Burns
Councillor Glenn Finlay
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Stephen McIlveen
Ms Wendy Osborne OBE
Mr John Peto
Mr Harry Reid
Dr Margaret Ward
Councillor Billy Webb
Miss Linda Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Jim O'Hagan Chief Executive
Ms Helen Osborn Director of Library Services
Mr Desi Miskelly Director of Business Support
Ms Julie Reid Service Development Manager
Ms Heather Ferguson Assistant Human Resource Manager
Mr Neil Prior IT Support Officer
Ms Gillian Clarke PA Director Business Support/HR Assistant
Mr Ken Smyth Boardroom Apprentice

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Councillor Alistair Cathcart
Councillor Cara Hunter
Councillor Cheryl Johnston
Councillor Garath Keating
Councillor Donal Lyons Vice-Chairperson
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan

No observer from the Department was present at the Board Meeting.
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 reported that five new Members had been appointed to the Libraries NI Board as at 1 November 2019 i.e. Councillor Alistair Cathcart, Councillor Glenn Finlay, Councillor Cara Hunter, Councillor Cheryl Johnston and Miss Linda Wilson. He welcomed Councillor Finlay and Miss Wilson to their first meeting of the Libraries NI Board.

3.2 The Chairperson welcomed, as part of the Leadership Development Plan, the following staff to the meeting:

- Ms G Clarke, PA to Director of Business Support and HR Assistant
- Ms H Ferguson, Assistant HR Manager
- Mr N Prior, IT Support Officer
- Ms J Reid, Service Development Manager

3.3 The Chairperson reported that Alderman S Martin had resigned from the Libraries NI Board effective from 29 November 2019. On behalf of Members he thanked Alderman Martin for his service as a Board Member and wished him well for the future. He added that a reserve candidate had been appointed in the recent recruitment process and would be approached at the conclusion of the pre-election period ‘Purdah’ on 12 December 2019, subject to the agreement of the Permanent Secretary, Department for Communities.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

4.1 The Chief Executive presented a pre-circulated paper and drew attention to the undernoted items:

- Changes at NIPSA
- Boardroom Apprentice Programme 2020
- Review of Public Library Standards
- Presentation to Permanent Secretaries, 8 November 2019
- International Children’s Day, 20 November 2019
- Additional Funding for Stock
- Meeting with the Director of Culture Division, 5 December 2019
- Senior Staff Retirements
- Accountability Meeting, 22 October 2019
4.2 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Mr N Bodger it was agreed that Libraries NI should continue to participate in the Boardroom Apprentice Programme for 2020.

4.3 On a suggestion by Councillor B Webb, the Chief Executive confirmed that he would welcome the opportunity to make a presentation to NILGA on the services offered by Libraries NI.

4.4 Members were informed that Ms J McKinstry had been appointed as the new Head of Human Resources to replace Mrs M Walker who had retired in November 2019. It was further noted that a recruitment process was underway to appoint two Deputy Heads of Service, which due to internal restructuring, would replace the post of Assistant Director as Ms M Bryson was due to retire at the end of December 2019. The Board wished both members of staff a long, happy and healthy retirement.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2019

5.1 On a proposal by Mr H Reid, seconded by Dr M Ward, the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 17 October 2019 were approved.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 17 OCTOBER 2019

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. He noted that all actions were either completed or on the Agenda for further discussion with the exception of the following:

Item 11.5: Revised Libraries NI Byelaws

6.2 The Chief Executive reported that, following the required consultation period, he had written to Ms T Meharg, Permanent Secretary, Department for Communities (DfC) on 2 December 2019 enclosing the revised Libraries NI Byelaws and requesting departmental approval.

7. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

7.1 The Chief Executive reminded Members that in line with the Board Operating Framework and Standing Orders it is the role of the Board to determine and approve the composition and membership of Committees.

7.2 He explained that as not all of the new Members were able to attend today’s Board Meeting it would not be possible to fill all of the existing vacancies. The following Members had expressed their preferences:
Councillor G Finlay: Services Committee and Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
Ms L Wilson: Business Support Committee
Mrs D Kenny who currently serves on the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had also expressed a wish to serve on the Services Committee.

7.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Councillor B Webb, the Board agreed the nominations to Committees as stated at paragraph 7.2 above.

7.4 Following a discussion regarding the way forward to appoint new Members to Committees it was agreed that the Chief Executive would contact the remaining new Members and seek their preferences for Committee Membership which would be considered at the February meeting of the Board.

8. PRESENTATION: A NEW YEAR, A NEW YOU

8.1 The Chairperson introduced Ms J Reid, Service Development Manager to give a presentation to Members on ‘A New Year, a New You’.

8.2 Ms Reid informed Members that she was responsible for the Health and Wellbeing remit within Libraries NI and had responsibility for the Information and Learning Team which delivers digital and health focussed programmes.

8.3 She informed Members of the many ways in which Libraries NI contributes to the promotion of improving health and reducing loneliness and isolation through books, partnerships such as MacMillan Cancer Support and the Patient and Client Council and through social programmes such as Knit and Natter and reading groups. Ms Reid also drew attention to new initiatives on offer such as the ‘Cryptic Corner’ which helps to retain cognitive skills and improve memory using puzzles and crosswords, creating a personal playlist which helps create connections to memories and other initiatives such as a ‘Lets get Moving’ and a ‘Masterclass with Professor James Morton’. Members were informed that details on all of the initiatives were available on the Libraries NI website and Members were encouraged to promote these activities as far as possible.

8.4 Members thanked Ms Reid for her interesting and informative presentation.

9. MANAGEMENT REPORT

9.1 The Chief Executive and the Director of Business Support briefed the Board on the Management Report as follows.
Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Quarter 2: July to September 2019

9.2 Members were advised that the majority of KPIs remain on target for achievement.

Finance Report: October 2019

9.3 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for Capital and Recurrent spend to October 2019 which had been reviewed by the Business Support Committee at its meeting held on 28 November 2019.

9.4 He drew attention to the Capital budget and advised that although the report currently projected an underspend, the Department had not yet confirmed budget easements, and when accepted it was projected that the budget would be fully spent by year-end.

9.5 The Director of Business Support then drew attention to the Recurrent Budget noting that even with savings from Summer Opening Hours and Christmas Closure there still remained pressure on staffing costings adding that currently no additional actions were recommended. He advised that full spend was projected for the year end.


9.6 The Chief Executive then drew attention to the Quarter 2 update on the Business Plan 2019/20 and reported that good progress was being made in respect of the majority of targets. He reported that the stock target which was shown as red in the report did not take into account the recent allocation of additional funding for stock which would bring the spend per capita to approximately £1.85 against a Public Library Standard target of £2.25. Members also noted that the target for payment of invoices which was also shown as ‘red’ in the report averaged 99% against a target of 100%.

10. BOARD EFFECTIVENESS 2019/20

10.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Board Effectiveness Review 2019/20.

10.2 Members discussed the process and the Chief Executive agreed to complete the questionnaire and bring a completed version back to the February Board Meeting for approval. It was also agreed that a copy of the Effectiveness Review for 2018/19 together with a copy of the Action Plan would be circulated to Members for information.


11.1 The Chief Executive reminded Members that a revised draft of the Corporate Plan covering the period 2020 – 2024 had been presented at the last meeting
of the Board held on 17 October 2019. Following discussion at this meeting Officers had agreed to carry out further work to refine outcomes in the Corporate Plan which were now reflected as ‘Outcome Areas’. He explained that the Corporate Plan, as presented, provides strategic direction and a framework for planning for business while at the same time introducing an outcomes based approach would continue to evolve and develop over the lifetime of the Corporate Plan.

11.2 The Chief Executive then updated Members regarding the Annual Business Plan 2020/21 and drew attention to the template which would be used to develop and record the specific targets and objectives against the Outcome Areas and Strategic Actions. He reported that a draft of the Annual Business Plan 2020 – 2021 would be brought to the February meeting of the Board.

11.3 On a proposal by Councillor S McIlveen, seconded by Mr N Bodger the Board approved the draft Corporate Plan 2020 – 24 and noted that work had commenced in respect of the Annual Business Plan 2020 - 21.

12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2019 LNI 07.12.19

12.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2019 noting that an oral report of this meeting had been given at the Board Meeting held on 17 October 2019 and at that meeting the Board had approved the following:

- Libraries NI Draft Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19
- Corporate Risk Register
- Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2019)

12.2 She reminded Members that she had also given a full report of discussions which had taken place at the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 16 October 2019, and that there were two items which required Board approval i.e. Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2018/19 and Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Revised).

12.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Councillor S McIlveen, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 16 October 2019.

12.4 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Councillor S McIlveen, the Board also approved the:

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2018/19
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Revised)
13. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2019

13.1 In the absence of the Committee Vice-Chairperson Councillor C Mallaghan, who had chaired the meeting of the Committee held on 21 November 2019, the Director of Library Services, Ms H Osborn presented the minutes of the meeting and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items:

- Item 7: Reading and Reader Development Policy
- Item 8: Rural Needs Annual Report
- Item 9: Service Plan Progress Report and Risk Register
- Item 10: Marketing Presentation
- Item 11: Customer Feedback Report
- Item 12: Experience of the Public Library Service in Northern Ireland

13.2 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board Professor B Cullen, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Services Committee held on 21 November 2019.

13.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board Professor B Cullen, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board approved and adopted the Reading and Reader Development Policy.

14. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2019

14.1 In the absence of the Vice-Chairperson Councillor B Webb at the meeting of the Committee held on 28 November 2019, the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen presented the minutes of the meeting and drew attention in particular to the undernoted items:

- Item 6.1: Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson
- Item 7: Committee/Board Effectiveness Review
- Item 8: Managing Attendance at Work Policy
- Item 9: Paternity Leave Policy
- Item 10: Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Item 11: Policy on the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection
- Item 12: Audit of Inequalities 2019
- Item 15: Customer Feedback Report, October 2018 to September 2019
- Item 16: Information Systems e3 Programme Update Report November 2019
- Item 20: Sickness Absence Report to October 2019
14.2 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Alderman T Burns, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 28 November 2019

14.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Alderman T Burns, the Board approved the:

- Managing Attendance at Work Policy
- Paternity Leave Policy
- Shared Parental Leave Policy
- Policy on the Code of Procedures on Recruitment and Selection
- Audit of Inequalities 2019

15. **SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS: JANUARY 2020 TO MARCH 2021**

LNI 10.12.19

15.1 The Chairperson drew attention to the proposed Schedule of Meetings for the period 1 January 2020 to 31 March 2021. It was agreed that the Schedule would be re-issued to all Members for information and for noting in diaries.

16. **ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURES REVIEW: REPORT**

LNI 11.12.19

16.1 The Chief Executive presented the confidential paper on the Organisation and Structures Review. The Board noted the Organisation and Structures Report, including recommendations set out in it, and that it will be used as a basis for discussion with the Department on funding, developing proposals for consultation with staff and Trade Unions, and ultimately for developing implementation plans.

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 13 February 2020 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library.

19. **MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

19.1 The meeting ended at 12:33 pm.
19.2 All Members arrived for the commencement of the meeting and remained until it ended with the exception of the following:

Mr K Smyth arrived at 10:37 am
Councillor S McIver arrived at 10:38 am
Councillor T Burns arrived at 10:39 am

Mr H Reid left at 11:51 am

Signed: ____________________________

[Signature]

Date: ____________________________

13/02/2020