LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 13 February 2020 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT
Professor Bernard Cullen Chairperson
Mr Neil Bodger
Councillor Alistair Cathcart
Councillor Glenn Finlay
Councillor Cara Hunter
Councillor Cheryl Johnston
Councillor Garath Keating
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Councillor Stephen McIlveen
Ms Wendy Osborne
Mr John Peto
Mr Harry Reid
Dr Margaret Ward
Miss Linda Wilson

IN ATTENDANCE
Ms Helen Osborn Director of Library Services
Mr Desi Miskelly Director of Business Support
Ms Adrienne Adair Head of Service
Mr Alan Hughes Human Resources
Ms Roopali Sabarwal Finance Department
Mr Paul Gamble
Ms Ursula Palmer
Mr Ken Smyth Boardroom Apprentice

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Mr Jim O’Hagan Chief Executive
Alderman Thomas Burns
Councillor Julie Gilmour
Councillor Billy Webb
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 following:

- Councillor C Hunter and Councillor C Johnston to their first Libraries NI Board Meeting
- Mr P Gamble, Head of Museums and Libraries Branch, Department for Communities (DfC) and Ms U Palmer, Museums and Libraries Branch, DfC
- Ms A Adair, Head of Service
- Staff Members: Ms R Sabarwal, Finance Officer and Mr A Hughes, HR Officer who were attending as part of the Leadership Development Plan.

3.2 He reported that Councillor J Gilmour had been appointed to the Libraries NI Board as at 1 February 2020. Unfortunately, Councillor Gilmour had been unable to attend the meeting but hoped to be present at the April meeting of the Board.

3.3 The Chairperson also reported that Councillor S McIlveen had advised of his intention to resign from the Libraries NI Board. On behalf of Members he thanked Councillor McIlveen for his service and contribution to the Board over the past five years and wished him every success in future endeavours.

3.4 Members noted the passing of Mr F Brolly, husband of Councillor A Brolly who previously served on the Libraries NI Board. The Chairperson confirmed that a letter of condolence would be sent on behalf of Members.

3.5 The Chairperson informed Members that the Chief Executive was unable to attend the meeting due to personal circumstances, and that Ms H Osborn, Director of Library Services would act on his behalf.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

4.1 In the absence of the Chief Executive, the Director of Library Services referred Members to the paper which had been circulated, drawing attention in particular to the undernoted items:
Members noted that a copy of the report commissioned by DfC in respect of the Belfast Central Library Project would be brought to Members at a later date.

The Director of Library Services explained that notification had not yet been received of the funding allocation for 2020/21. As it is expected to be a one-year settlement she requested approval for Officers to begin the planning process for the implementation of summer opening hours in 2020 on a similar basis to 2019. After discussion, and on a proposal by Councillor C Mallaghan, seconded by Mr N Bodger, Members agreed the implementation of Summer Opening Hours 2020 in principle, and that delegated authority would be given to the Chairperson to revoke this decision if the budget allocation made this measure unnecessary.

The Director of Library Services thanked all Members who had supported and/or promoted the hugely successful ‘A New Year, a New You’ initiative and thanked DfC for publicising the event. She reported that another initiative ‘Learnfest’ would take place in May of this year and further details would be provided to Members in due course.

On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Ms W Osborne, the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 12 December 2019 were approved.

The Director of Library Services 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 noted that all actions were either completed or on the Agenda for further discussion.
7. COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

7.1 Members were reminded 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. Five new Board Members had been appointed with effect from 1 November 2019 and two appointments had been made to Committees at the Board Meeting held in December 2019 with the remaining three appointments to be confirmed at today’s meeting.

7.2 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Councillor G Finlay, the Board agreed the following appointments to Committees:

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee: Councillor A Cathcart
- Business Support Committee: Councillor C Johnston
- Business Support Committee: Councillor C Hunter

8. DEPARTMENT FOR COMMUNITIES (DfC) REPRESENTATIVE: DRAFT PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT

8.1 The Chairperson introduced Mr P Gamble, Head of Museums and Libraries Branch, DfC to give a presentation on the Draft Partnership Agreement.

8.2 Mr Gamble explained the background to the implementation of the Draft Partnership Agreement and how the Department would work with each ALB to help embed the process. He emphasised the importance of governance arrangements and the role of the Accounting Officer. Mr Gamble stated that a good working relationship already existed between Libraries NI and the Department and that the Partnership Agreement, when finalised, would be brought to Members for approval.

8.3 The Chairperson thanked Mr Gamble for his presentation.

9. PRESENTATION: PROMOTING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

9.1 The Chairperson introduced Ms A Adair, Head of Service to give a presentation to Members on ‘Access to Collections’.

9.2 Ms Adair explained the different types of collections on offer and the ways in which they are promoted. She explained that a new initiative promoting access to Cultural Heritage and Information Resources had been introduced in 2019 with the purpose of increasing participation in Heritage and Information Services and to promote access to Libraries NI’s vast resources by making previously non-borrowable stock accessible. She drew attention to the partnerships and initiatives which are in place to promote the various collections. Ms Adair described some of the unique items which were held in the main Heritage locations and in Belfast Central Library and how they are preserved and conserved. She then drew attention to the Libraries NI podcast which links to the BBC One Hundred Books initiative.
9.3 Members thanked Ms Adair for her interesting and informative presentation.

10. DRAFT ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2020/21 LNI 04.02.20

10.1 The Director of Library Services presented the first draft of the Annual Business Plan 2020/21 and informed Members that the targets were tentative at this stage due to a lack of information regarding the budget for 2020/21. She reported that the Annual Business Plan 2020/21 takes cognisance of the recently approved Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 and planning frameworks including the draft Programme for Government (PfG) and the Outcomes Delivery Plan.

10.2 She added that the draft Business Plan targets for 2020/21 would be shared with the Department and would be revised and updated, as appropriate, to take account of Departmental priorities. Depending on the financial situation, it may be necessary to review, revise and update a number of targets, particularly those relating to participation and activities, but some structure to which staff can work with effect from 1 April 2020 and to allow Service Plans to be developed was necessary.

10.3 Members noted that a further iteration of the Business Plan would be brought to the Board for approval, when more information and clarification on the financial position for 2020/21 is available.

10.4 Members discussed the document in detail and in the course of the discussion the importance of the role of the library as a community hub, of digital inclusion, of heritage services and of effective marketing were highlighted.

10.5 Members noted the report.

11. BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2019/20 LNI 05.02.20

11.1 The Chairperson informed Members that individual Committees had reviewed their effectiveness, including the continued relevance of the Schemes of Delegation. The review papers are appended to the minutes of the meetings at which the review was undertaken and were included in the papers sent to Members.

11.2 It was noted that at its meeting on 15 January 2020, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had completed an effectiveness review using the National Audit Office Self-Assessment Checklist.

11.3 Members reviewed the draft Action Plan which summarised the issues for further action arising from the completed effectiveness reviews.

11.4 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Councillor S McIlveen, Members confirmed that they were content that all reviews had been completed, that the
Board and its Committees were operating effectively and the draft Action Plan was agreed.

11.5 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Mr N Bodger, Members approved the Services Committee Scheme of Delegation as amended to include Byelaws and Community Planning as part of its Functions.

12. MANAGEMENT REPORT  

12.1 The Director of Library Services and the Director of Business Support briefed the Board on the Management Report as follows:

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2019/20 Quarter 3: October – December 2019

12.2 Members were advised that at the end of Quarter 3 progress continues to be made in respect of the achievement of the Key Performance Indicators.

Finance Reports: December 2019

12.3 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for Capital and Recurrent spend to December 2019 which had been reviewed by the Business Support Committee at its meeting held on 30 January 2020. He reported that it was projected that both budgets would be fully spent by year-end.

Corporate Risk Register: January 2020

12.4 The Director of Business Support presented the Corporate Risk Register which had been reviewed by the Risk Management Group at its meeting held on 6 January 2020 and also by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 15 January 2020.

12.5 He explained that there had been a number of changes to the levels of treated risks which were largely due to the timing of the report within the financial year i.e. the reduction in probability of the risk materialising as the end of the financial year approaches.

12.6 He confirmed that Libraries NI was monitoring the Coronavirus situation and appropriate action would be taken in line with any guidance issued by the Public Health Agency.

12.7 On a proposal by Ms W Osborne, seconded by Councillor S McIlveen, the Board approved and adopted the Corporate Risk Register as at January 2020.

13. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 15 JANUARY 2020  

13.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items:
13.2 The Committee Chairperson congratulated Councillor G Finlay on being elected as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee.

13.3 On a proposal by the Committee Chairperson, Mrs D Kenny, seconded by the Vice-Chairperson Councillor G Finlay, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 15 January 2020.

13.4 On a proposal by the Committee Chairperson, Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Ms W Osborne the Board approved and adopted the following:

- the Internal Audit Charter
- NAO Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Effectiveness Checklist.

14. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2020
LNI 08.02.20

14.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Dr M Ward, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2020 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items:
Item 7  Review of Effectiveness of Services Committee
Item 8  Stock Policy
Item 9  Provision of a Cultural Heritage Service in Armagh
Item 10 Library Services in the Mid Ulster Area
Item 11 BBC ‘100 Novels that Shaped Our World’
Item 12 Outcomes-Based Accountability: An Evaluation of the Go On Programme 2018/29
Item 13 Engaging Libraries
Item 14 Libraries NI– A Network of Opportunities
Item 15 Public Libraries; A Case for Support, A Report produced by CILIP and the Big Issue

14.2 The Committee Chairperson drew attention to the discussion regarding proposals for the future of the cultural heritage service in Armagh. The Director of Library Services confirmed that discussions with staff and a consultation exercise with customers would take place over the next few weeks.

14.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Dr M Ward, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Services Committee held on 16 January 2020.

14.4 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee, Dr M Ward, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved and adopted the following:

- the Review of Effectiveness of the Services Committee to include the amended Scheme of Delegation as per paragraph 11.5 above
- the Stock Policy

15. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2020 LNI 09.02.20

15.1 In the absence of the Chairperson of the Committee, Councillor B Webb, the Director of Business Support presented the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 30 January 2020 and drew attention in particular to the undernoted items:

- Item 6  Matters arising from the Minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 28 November 2019, Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson
- Item 7  Committee/Board Effectiveness Review
- Item 8  Sponsorship Policy Review
Item 9  Records Management Policy Review
Item 10  Information Systems/e3 Programme Update Report January 2020
Item 11:  Finance Reports to December 2019
Item 12  Procurement Reports
Item 13:  Sickness Absence Report to October 2019
Item 14:  Tender Reports
Item 15  Report on the Use of the Common Seal

15.2 Members noted that Councillor B Webb had been elected as Chairperson of the Business Support Committee and Mr N Bodger as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee.

15.3 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr N Bodger, seconded by Councillor C Hunter, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 30 January 2020.

15.4 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr N Bodger, seconded by Miss L Wilson, the Board approved and adopted the following:

- the Committee’s Effectiveness Review to include the Scheme of Delegation which remained relevant and appropriate to the operation of the Committee
- the Sponsorship Policy Review
- the Records Management Policy Review

16. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE  

16.1 Officers withdrew from the meeting for this item.

16.2 The Chairperson reported on the work of the Remuneration Committee, which had met on two occasions during 2019/20 (4 July 2019 and 12 December 2019). He reported on a range of matters including latest developments regarding SMT pay and conditions and the effectiveness of the Committee, the Scheme Specifying the Duties and Responsibilities to be Discharged and the Procedure to be Followed by the Remuneration Committee. The outcome of the Review was that the Committee operated effectively during 2019/20 and the current Scheme of Delegation remains fit for purpose and no amendments are required.
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 23 April 2020 at 10.30 am in Lisburn City Library.

19. **MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

19.1 The meeting ended at 12.40 pm.

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

Mr J Peto left at 12.05 pm  
Mr H Reid left at 12.10 pm

Signed: ________________________________  

Date: 23 April 2020