LIBRARIES NI
The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on Thursday 17 October 2019 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT
Professor Bernard Cullen
Councillor Donal Lyons
Chairperson
Vice-Chairperson

Mr Neil Bodger
Alderman Thomas Burns
Councillor Garath Keating
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Councillor Stephen McIlveen
Ms Wendy Osborne
Mr John Peto
Mr Harry Reid
Dr Margaret Ward

IN ATTENDANCE
Mr Jim O’Hagan
Chief Executive
Ms Helen Osborn
Director of Library Services
Mr Desi Miskelly
Director of Business Support
Ms Adrienne Adair
Assistant Director
Mr Brian Doherty
Head of Internal Audit
Ms Margaret Bell
Service Development Manager
Ms Sharon Hawthorne
Human Resource Department
Ms Elaine Meaklim
Finance Department
Mr Ken Smyth
Boardroom Apprentice

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Alderman Stephen Martin
Councillor Billy Webb

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 reminded Members that as part of the Leadership Development Plan it had been agreed that some staff should attend Board and Committee meetings as part of their personal development and welcomed the following staff to the meeting:

- Ms A Adair, Assistant Director
- Ms E Meaklin, Finance Department
- Ms S Hawthorne, Human Resource Department

3.2 He advised Members that Mrs M Bell, Service Development Manager, Digital Inclusion would give the presentation at Agenda Item 9 and that Mr B Doherty, Head of Internal Audit was in attendance at the meeting.

3.3 The Chairperson reported that the Permanent Secretary for the Department for Communities (DfC) had appointed five new Members to the Libraries NI Board. The appointments were due to commence on 1 November 2019 and it was hoped that the new Members would be in attendance for the next meeting of the Board to be held on 12 December 2019.

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.

**Experience of Culture and the Arts in Northern Ireland 2018/19**

4.2 DfC has published the findings from the Continuous Household Survey on 'Experience of culture and the arts in Northern Ireland 2018/19'. A copy of the full report can be accessed on the Department's website.

**Public Library Champion 2019**

4.3 Ms J McFrederick, Branch Library Manager, Carrickfergus was awarded the title of Public Library Champion 2019 at an awards ceremony held in London on 4 October 2019. This prestigious award is conferred by the Public and Mobile Libraries Group of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) and recognises the achievement of outstanding frontline public library staff that make a real difference to the people who use their library. Members asked that their congratulations be noted and conveyed to Ms McFrederick.
Invitation to Present to the NICS Board

4.4 The Permanent Secretary, DfC has asked the Chief Executive to give a presentation on Libraries NI to the NICS Board. This Board comprises the Head of the Civil Service and the Permanent Secretaries of all central government departments.

Restructuring within the Department for Communities (DfC)

4.5 Following an internal review within the Engaged Communities Group in DfC Museums and Libraries Branch has been moved from Active Communities Division to the Culture Division effective from 1 October 2019. It was noted that Ms M Walls is Director of the Culture Division within DfC.

Presentation to CILIP Ireland

4.6 The Chief Executive reported that he had given a short presentation on Libraries NI at the CILIP Presidential Address event on 18 September 2019. This had provided him with an opportunity to meet the CILIP UK President, Mr D Stewart.

Belfast Central Library

4.7 DfC has engaged a professional design team ARUP to consider and propose options for developing Belfast Central Library within the context of a regeneration project. Meetings have been held with representatives from ARUP and it is hoped that the output from this exercise will help to inform the review and updating of the business case for the project.

MacMillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning

4.8 The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) renewing the partnership between Libraries NI and MacMillan Cancer Support was signed on 24 September 2019. The annual MacMillan Cancer Support Coffee Morning was held on 27 September 2019. A total of £15,102.09 was raised with 76 libraries taking part this year. The Chief Executive and Board Members thanked all staff involved in making this a highly successful event.

Branch Library Manager Dispute

4.9 It was agreed that this item would be discussed along with Agenda Item 15: Organisational Structure Review.

ALB Forum – 16 October 2019

4.10 The Chief Executive updated Members on the DfC Arms-Length Bodies (ALBs) Forum held on 16 October 2019. He advised that at the meeting discussion had taken place regarding the new approach to working relationships between government departments and ALBs based on the principles in the Partnership Code which was published in March 2019. The aim of the forum was to consider the practical implementation of the new partnership approach in order to enhance public accountability and services for citizens.

4.11 In response to a question from Mrs W Osborne it was agreed that a link to the Chief Executive's Forum, which contained the Partnerships Code would be forwarded to Members.
5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 4 JULY 2019
   LNI 01.10.19

5.1 On a proposal by Councillor S McIlveen, seconded by Alderman T Burns, the
minutes of the Board Meeting held on 4 July 2019 were approved.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
   BOARD HELD ON 4 July 2019
   LNI 02.10.19

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 5.3: Review of Committee Membership

6.2 It was noted that this item had been completed and that the Schedule of dates
for Board and Committee Meetings 2019/20 had been re-issued to Board
Members on 10 July 2019.

   Item 5.5: Review of Committee Membership

6.3 It was noted that this item had also been completed and that approval for new
Board Members appointments to Committees had been granted at the Board
Meeting held on 12 September 2019.

7. MINUTES OF THE BOARD PLANNING MEETING HELD ON
   12 SEPTEMBER 2019
   LNI 03.10.19

7.1 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Mr N Bodger, the minutes of the
Board Planning Meeting held on 12 September 2019 were approved.

8. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE BOARD PLANNING MEETING HELD ON
   12 SEPTEMBER 2019
   LNI 04.10.19

8.1 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 6.4: An overview of the draft Corporate Plan 2020 - 24

8.2 Members noted that this item would be discussed further at Agenda Item 14
and that the Senior Management Team would begin work on the Annual
Business Plan 2020 – 21 using the draft Corporate Plan 2020 – 24 as a basis
for development of the business plan. It was hoped that the first draft of the
business plan would be brought to the December meeting of the Board.

   Item 8.2: Organisational Structures Review

8.3 Members noted that this item would be discussed further at Agenda Item 15.
9. PRESENTATION: DIGITAL INCLUSION

9.1 The Chairperson introduced Mrs M Bell, Service Development Manager, to give a presentation to Members on Digital Inclusion.

9.2 Mrs M Bell gave an overview of digital inclusion and the benefits it can provide to the public and communities. She outlined the services offered by Libraries NI such as free access to computers and Wi-Fi and the development of IT skills through courses such as GOT IT and Go On. She added that libraries can provide a safe place for government and other providers to provide access to their services and Libraries NI have worked with other organisations to support digital rollout including with the Education Authority for school enrolments and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) for the digital support needed for filling in Census forms.

9.3 She drew attention to the Digital Citizen project which is funded by the Department for Communities (DfC) and the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA). This project commenced in September 2018 and is due to finish in March 2020 and targets groups at risk of digital exclusion, especially those in neighbourhood renewal areas and in rural areas. The Digital Citizen team comprises six members of staff delivering training in libraries and also in community settings.

9.4 Members thanked Mrs Bell for her presentation and commended all staff involved in providing this service.

10. LIBRARIES NI ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2019/20

10.1 The Chief Executive presented four documents for the consideration of the Board and reported on each in turn.

Provisional Report to Those Charged with Governance 2018/19

10.2 The Chief Executive reported that the Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) has completed the audit of the 2018/19 Accounts and is proposing to certify them without qualification. He also reported that no observations or findings were highlighted for the 2018/19 year and that a ‘clean’ audit certificate would be issued.

10.3 Members noted the Provisional Report to Those Charged with Governance 2018/19.

Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2018/19

10.4 The Chief Executive reported that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is required to report annually to the Board on the External Audit Statement in respect of the Accounts, the state of the organisation’s finances and on the adequacy and effectiveness of risk management and other governance and control issues within the organisation.
10.5 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny confirmed that Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee were content to provide this assurance based on the work carried out by the Committee during the year. Members also noted the Head of Internal Audit’s assurance contained in the report.

10.6 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny asked that it be noted the contribution made by Councillor S McGuigan, the previous Committee Chairperson to the work carried out by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee during the year which resulted in the assurance provided by the Committee.

**Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19**

10.7 The Chief Executive drew Members’ attention to the Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19 and reported that no significant changes had been made to the document since it was last reviewed by Members.

10.8 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Mr N Bodger, the Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19 for submission to the Comptroller and Auditor General for certification.

10.9 The Chief Executive congratulated Mrs R McNamee, Finance Manager and her team for their hard work which had resulted in a ‘clean’ audit report. He also commended the Head of Internal Audit and the Auditor for their input to the process. The Chairperson extended his thanks and those of Members to all staff involved in this process.

**Letter of Representation**

10.10 The Chief Executive referred to the Letter of Representation and reminded Members that as Accounting Officer he is required to submit a Letter of Representation when the signed Annual Report and Accounts were being sent to the Comptroller and Auditor General for certification.

10.11 Members noted the Letter of Representation.

11. **REVISED LIBRARIES NI BYELAWS**

11.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the draft revised Libraries NI Byelaws and reminded Members that the Byelaws were last reviewed in 2014.

11.2 He advised that the Byelaws were required under the Libraries Act and that Officers had reviewed them in light of experience since then, the new draft Model Byelaws developed by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) and legal advice.

11.3 Members noted that approval must be sought from DfC to implement the revised Byelaws and that one month prior to submitting to DfC for approval the revised Byelaws should be available, on request, from the Chief Executive’s Office, Libraries NI Headquarters, Lisburn City Library.
11.4 There was a discussion about the draft revised Byelaws during which the Director of Library Services answered questions and noted suggestions. She confirmed that a summary of the key points would be prepared for customers once the Byelaws had been finalised.

11.5 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Alderman T Burns the Board approved the draft Byelaws and agreed that they should be made available for public consultation for a period of one month before being submitted to DfC for approval.

12. LIBRARIES NI STANDING ORDERS  

12.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Libraries NI Standing Orders noting that it was last reviewed in April 2016. He advised that it was best practice to review the document on a regular basis and reported that no amendments were being proposed. He suggested that if Members were content the document should remain as it stands and therefore the Standing Orders approved at the Board meeting on 21 April 2016 should continue in effect.

12.2 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board agreed the Standing Orders were fit for purpose, without any amendments and the Standing Orders approved at the Board meeting on 21 April 2016 would remain in effect.

13. MANAGEMENT REPORT  

13.1 The Chief Executive and the Director of Business Support briefed the Board on the Management Report as follows.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Quarter 1: April to June 2019  

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

Finance Report: August 2019  

13.3 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for Capital and Recurrent spend to August 2019 which had been reviewed by the Business Support Committee at its meeting held on 26 September 2019.

13.4 He advised Members that the Recurrent report includes some additional in-year funding which was allocated at the end of August 2019 but does not include allocations received since the beginning of September 2019. He reported that some pressures remain in the staffing budget however savings are projected from closure over the Christmas period. Members noted that it was anticipated that the Recurrent budget would be fully spent by year end.

13.5 The Director of Business Support then drew attention to the Capital Report noting that a number of large capital projects were still on-going. He advised
that in September 2019 the Department had asked that the delivery programme for capital expenditure be modified in order that an in-year capital easement could be made (approximately £120,000). He reported that Officers were working with the Department to fulfil this request.

Corporate Risk Register  LNI 08.10.19 (iii)

13.6 The Director of Business Support drew attention to the Corporate Risk Register which had been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 16 October 2019.

13.7 He also drew attention to the Corporate Risk Horizon Scanning document which had been requested by Members of the Business Support Committee and which endeavoured to identify emerging challenges and threats which had the potential to impact on the risk profile of the organisation in the future.

13.8 The Director of Business Support referred to the Corporate Risk Register noting that in some cases the Treated risk had been re-evaluated to account for the allocation of in-year resources which had reduced pressure in the areas of staffing, premises and stock. Members noted the following:

- **Risk 2: Stakeholder Engagement –** a Customer Survey had been undertaken and managers would develop and implement action plans arising from the survey where appropriate

- **Risk 4: Corporate Governance –** after review the treated risk was amended downward and was now considered to be 'green'

- **Risk 8: Business Continuity –** a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) or Service Level Agreement (SLA) would be prepared setting out the detail of scope of services and arrangements with Enterprise Shared Services (ESS).

13.9 On a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Mr J Peto, the Board approved and adopted the Corporate Risk Register as at September 2019.

Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2019)  LNI 08.10.19 (iv)

13.10 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 30 September 2019. He confirmed that it had been scrutinised by Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at the meeting of the Committee held on 16 October 2019, and Members had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval.

13.11 He referred in particular to Section 3: Risk Management which detailed the risks currently identified within the organisation and reported that one new risk had been identified in relation to the re-alignment of pay scales which forms part of the current two-year national pay settlement for staff.

13.12 The Chief Executive then drew attention to those sections of the Statement which had been recorded as 'Working towards Compliance' and explained the issues behind the selection of this option and where applicable actions being
taken to remedy the situation. He asked Members to note that a new statement had been added in relation to Community Planning.

13.13 Members noted that a copy of the draft Assurance Statement had been forwarded to the Department for Communities (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.

13.14 Following discussion of the Statement, on a proposal by Mrs D Kenny, seconded by Alderman T Burns, 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 30 September 2019.

14. LIBRARIES NI CORPORATE PLAN 2020 -24

14.1 The Chief Executive presented the Libraries NI Corporate Plan 2020-24 and reminded Members that at the Board Planning Meeting held on 12 September 2019, a draft of the Plan had been considered and a number of suggestions had been made. An updated version of the Plan taking into account feedback received, was now brought back to Members for consideration.

14.2 Members noted that a copy of the draft Corporate Plan 2020 – 24 had been submitted to DfC in order for the Department to comment on before the final version is produced. The Board acknowledged that moving to an outcomes based accountability approach represented a new departure for Libraries NI and this would continue to be developed and refined over time. Nevertheless, it was agreed that SMT should review the outcomes reflected in the current version of the Corporate Plan with a view to refining them further. A final version of the Plan would be brought to the next meeting of the Board on 12 December 2019.

Members agreed that Agenda Item 15: Organisational Structure Review be taken at the end of the meeting and moved to Agenda Item 16: Minutes of the Services Committee held on 12 September 2019

15. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2019

15.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Dr M Ward, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 12 September 2019 and drew attention, in particular to the undernoted items.

Item 3: Election of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson

15.2 Members noted that, in line with Standing Orders, the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Dr M Ward was elected as Chairperson of the Committee. It was
also noted that Councillor C Mallaghan was elected as Vice-Chairperson of the Committee.

**Item 8: Room Hire Policy**

15.3 The Committee had considered the Room Hire Policy in line with the policy review cycle and had recommended it to the Board for approval.

**Item 9: Customer Survey**

15.4 It was noted that the Committee had received a report on the Customer Survey which had taken place in 32 libraries from 29 April to 18 May 2019. The questionnaire included questions on various aspects of the library service and questions that inform three of the Public Library Standards.

**Item 10: Libraries NI Contribution to Good Relations Week**

15.5 The Committee had received a presentation from Ms K McClelland, Senior Good Relations Manager on Libraries NI’s contribution to Good Relations Week and overall promotion of good relations.

15.6 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Dr M Ward, seconded by the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Services Committee held on 12 September 2019.

15.7 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Dr M Ward, seconded by the Vice-Chairperson, Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved and adopted the Room Hire Policy.

16. **MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 SEPTEMBER 2019**

16.1 In the absence of the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Councillor B Webb, the Director of Business Support, Mr D Miskelly presented the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 26 September 2019, 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 26 September 2019**

16.2 The Committee agreed to defer the election of a Chairperson until the full complement of new Board Members (both elected representatives and independent members) had been appointed and the make-up of the Committee established.

**Item 7: Sponsorship Policy Review**

16.3 It was noted that the Committee had considered the revised Sponsorship Policy and it had been agreed that Officers would further review the policy in light of suggestions from Members, and bring back to a subsequent meeting of the Committee for further consideration.
Item 8: Corporate Social Responsibility Statement Review

16.4 The Committee had considered the Corporate Social Responsibility Statement Review and had recommended it to the Board for approval.

Item 9: Statutory Equality and Good Relations Annual Report 2018/19

16.5 The Committee had considered the Statutory Equality and Good Relations Annual Report 2018/19 and had recommended it to the Board for approval.

Item 10: Information Systems e3 Programme Update Report September 2019

16.6 It was noted that the Committee had received an update from the Head of ICT detailing progress to date and plans for the e3 programme.

Item 12: Health and Safety Report for 2018/19

16.7 The Committee had received a report from the Assets Manager regarding health and safety during 2018/19. Members noted that most of the incidents were in relation to slips and falls and Officers agreed to consider signage displaying statistics regarding the number of accident free days etc. to encourage caution.

Item 13: Post Project Evaluations (PPE) Lessons Learned Report 2018/19

16.8 It was noted that the Committee had received a report from the Director of Business Support in relation to the Post Project Evaluation (PPE) Lessons Learned Report 2018/19. This report combines lessons learned from internal analysis of business cases and post project evaluations.

Item 15: Procurement Reports

16.9 The Committee had received and noted a report on tenders and single tender actions over £1,000 during the period 16 May 2019 to 11 September 2019.

Item 16: Sickness Absence Report to August 2019

16.10 The Committee had received a report from the HR Manager on the Sickness Absence for the period January to August 2019 and noted that there had been an overall improvement in absence levels and targets were currently being achieved.

Item 17: Tender Report 2019 Capital Programme

16.11 It was noted that the Committee had received a report from the Assets Manager detailing the outcome of procurement action to formally appoint consultants to undertake design team services.

16.12 On a proposal by Alderman T Burns, seconded by Mr N Bodger, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 26 September 2019.

16.13 On a proposal by Alderman T Burns, seconded by Mr N Bodger, the Board approved and adopted the Corporate Social Responsibility Statement Review.

16.14 On a proposal by Alderman T Burns, seconded by Mr N Bodger, the Board approved and adopted the Statutory Equality and Good Relations Annual Report.
17. REPORT OF A MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 16 OCTOBER 2019

17.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Mrs D Kenny, reminded Members that a meeting of the Committee had taken place on 16 October 2019, the formal minutes of which would be available at the next Board Meeting to be held on 12 December 2019. She confirmed that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had recommended approval of the following items to the Board:

- Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2018/19
- Annual Report and Accounts 2018/19
- Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2019)
- Corporate Risk Register September 2019
- Gifts and Hospitality Policy (Revised) and Guidance

17.2 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee also highlighted the following items that were presented at the meeting:

- Internal Audit Activity Report – 10 Audit Reports had been issued since the last meeting of the Committee. In every case a ‘Satisfactory’ level of assurance was provided and no Priority One recommendations made.
- Internal Audit Outstanding Recommendations – since the last meeting of the Committee 20 internal audit recommendations were made or were previously outstanding of which 7 had now been confirmed as implemented, leaving 13 currently outstanding. None of these 13 was a Priority One recommendation. Four are highlighted as ‘Red’ i.e. being outstanding by more than four months due to delays in the consultation process necessary when implementing new or revised policies which impact on staff terms and conditions of employment.
- Internal Audit Annual Plan Progress Report - 33 audits had been planned for the year with 14 completed to date and a further eight underway. It was noted the target is on track for completion.
- Annual Governance Report – in 2018/19 one incident of fraud was reported requiring investigation. No concerns were raised through the Whistleblowing policy.
- Members had received an update on Mission Critical Projects including the e2 / e3 contracts and the Belfast Central Library Project.

17.3 Members noted the report.

*Members returned to Agenda Item 15: Organisational Structure Review*
ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE REVIEW

18.1 A confidential paper setting out a proposed change to the management structure in the Library Services Directorate was presented to the Board. The paper was presented in the context of other changes and proposals emerging as part of the wider Organisational Structures (OS) Review and in particular those relating to Front-line Service Delivery and Key Service Priorities.

18.2 Board members noted the changes proposed to the Library Services Directorate management structure and the steps that will be taken to move to implement the revised structure.

ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

19.1 There was no other notified business.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

20.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on Thursday 12 December 2019 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library.

MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

21.1 The meeting ended at 1:00 pm.

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

Councillor G Keating arrived at 10:36 am
Mr Harry Reid arrived at 10:50 am
Ms S Hawthorne left at 12:11 pm

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 12/12/2019