LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of the Authority held on
Thursday 11 October 2018 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library

PRESENT
Professor Bernard Cullen
Councillor Garath Keating
Councillor Dr Janet Gray
Mrs Deirdre Kenny
Councillor Donal Lyons
Councillor Cathal Mallaghan
Alderman Stephen Martin
Mr Alastair McDowell
Councillor Seán McGuigan
Mr Harry Reid
Alderman Marion Smith
Dr Margaret Ward
Councillor Billy Webb
Ms Jane Williams

IN ATTENDANCE
Mr Jim O'Hagan
Ms Helen Osborn
Mr Desi Miskelly
Mr Brian Doherty
Ms Trisha Ward
Mr Susheel Bhandari
Ms Lorraine Hart
Ms Amy Lucas
Ms Diane McGlynn

Chief Executive
Director of Library Services
Director of Business Support
Head of Internal Audit
Assistant Director
Procurement Officer
Assistant HR Manager
Board Room Apprentice
Minutes

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON ATTENDANCE

Apologies were received from Alderman T Burns, Alderman, T Campbell and Alderman W Leathem.

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 T Ward, Assistant Director
- Mr S Bhandari, Procurement Officer
- Ms L Hart, Acting Assistant HR Manager.

3.2 The Chairperson, Professor B Cullen, advised that a request, in line with Standing Orders, had been made by the Trade Unions to address the Board in relation to the current industrial dispute concerning job evaluation of the Branch Library Managers' (BLMs') post.

3.3 Councillor B Webb reminded the Board of his previous declaration that his daughter-in-law is an employee of the Labour Relations Agency. The Director of Business Support confirmed that this issue had been explored and that the Labour Relations Agency had confirmed that she was not involved in any activities relating to the BLM dispute.

3.4 On a proposal by the Chairperson, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Ms D Kenny the Board agreed to receive the deputation in committee as the next item of business.

4. DEPUTATION TO THE BOARD FROM TRADE UNIONS CONCERNING THE BRANCH LIBRARY MANAGER INDUSTRIAL DISPUTE LNI 05.10.18

4.1 On a proposal by Professor B Cullen, seconded by Alderman S Martin, the meeting went into committee. The following staff withdrew from the meeting: Mr B Doherty, Ms T Ward, Mr S Bhandari, Ms L Hart and Ms D McGlynn.

IN COMMITTEE

4.2 The Chairperson reported that while in committee he welcomed Mr P Mackel, NIPSA, Mr J McKeeegan, NIPSA, and Ms D McCusker, Unison, to the meeting and invited them to make their presentation to the Board.

4.3 The Trade Union representatives made their presentation with Board Members seeking clarification on a number of points. The Chairperson thanked the Trade Union representatives for the presentation, indicated that the Board was keen to see a resolution to the dispute and emphasised the need for engagement to continue with Libraries NI Officers through the established channels.

4.4 The Trade Union representatives left the meeting.
4.5 On the proposal of the Chairperson, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Alderman S Martin, the meeting came out of committee and officers rejoined the meeting.

OUT OF COMMITTEE

5. CHIEF EXECUTIVE’S BUSINESS

5.1 The Chief Executive, Mr J O’Hagan referred to the report which had been circulated. He drew attention to the Boardroom Apprentice Scheme and information recently received including learning from the first year of the Scheme and guidance to help host Boards as the Scheme moves into the second year of operation.

5.2 He also drew attention to the Department for Communities (DfC) Arm’s Length Bodies (ALBs) Business Planning Event that took place on 9 October 2018 at which he gave a presentation identifying the challenges and highlighting the opportunities for Libraries NI. The event provided a good opportunity to promote Libraries NI to other ALBs and senior staff in DfC.

5.3 The Chief Executive also referred to the organisation and structure review and confirmed that further updates would be provided as proposals were developed.

5.4 He then reminded the Board of the Belfast Central 130 celebrations and thanked Members for their support to date in promoting the anniversary on social media. He reported that he had taken part in a BBC radio interview and that a piece would possibly also appear on BBC Newsline.

5.5 The Chief Executive also reported on the World Health Organisation International Healthy Cities Conference which was held in Belfast on 1 – 4 October 2018. He commended Helen Poston, Service Development Manager, who presented a paper on promoting health and wellbeing in local libraries at this high profile event.

5.6 The Chief Executive drew attention to the successful launch of Get Online Week 2018 by Ms Sue Gray, the Permanent Secretary at the Department of Finance. The launch took place in Ballyhackamore Library during a Go On session in September.

5.7 He then reported that 81 branch libraries took part in the Macmillan Coffee Morning and thanked Board Members for their support for this event which due to the efforts of staff across the library network had raised a total of £13,932.96 for Macmillan Cancer Support. The money raised from seven branches is yet to be included in the total.

5.8 Mr J O’Hagan confirmed that an Accountability meeting with the Department for Communities was due to take place on 24 October 2018 and that he would report back to the Board in due course.
5.9 He also confirmed that BookweekNI will take place on 19 – 25 November 2018.

6. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 5 JULY 2018
   LNI 01.10.18

6.1 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, the
     minutes of the Board Meeting held on 5 July 2018 were approved.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
   BOARD HELD ON 5 JULY 2018
   LNI 02.10.18

7.1 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 4.7: Board Effectiveness Review
    7.2 Action has commenced on implementing the agreed ways of raising
         Members’ awareness of libraries and services.

    Item 8.5: Delivering Tomorrow’s Libraries: Public Library Standards 2016/17
    Performance Report – Draft Response

7.3 A response to the Permanent Secretary’s letter regarding the Delivering
     Tomorrow’s Libraries: Public Library Standards 2016/17 Performance Report
     has been issued.

    Item 10.2: Draft Libraries NI Business Plan 2018/19

7.4 A final draft of the Business Plan 2018/19 was submitted to the Department
     for approval.

    Item 11.4: Impacts of Savings Delivery Requirements 2018/19

7.5 The impact of adult participation levels is now reflected in the Savings
     Delivery Measures document.

8. MINUTES OF THE BOARD PLANNING MEETING HELD ON
   13 SEPTEMBER 2018
   LNI 03.10.18

8.1 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Dr M Ward, the minutes
     of the Board Planning Meeting held on 13 September 2018 were approved.

9. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE BOARD PLANNING MEETING HELD ON
   13 SEPTEMBER 2018
   LNI 04.10.18

9.1 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. He highlighted that given the close proximity of the meetings these items were work in progress.

**Item 4.11.1: Planning for 2019/20**

9.2 Libraries NI continues to make representation to the Department underlining the importance of a funding settlement for 2019/20 that adequately supports the wider contribution libraries make in areas such as health, well-being, education and digital inclusion.

9.3 The Chief Executive advised that e-mails highlighting the pressures Libraries NI faces had been included with a bid in the October monitoring round.

**Item 4.11.2: Planning for 2019/20**

9.4 Libraries NI continues to develop proposals, including the impacts on service delivery, by way of contingency planning in the event of a reduced budget.

9.5 Members sought clarification on the plans in place to manage the impact of a reduced budget on the current structure review. The Chief Executive advised the main purpose of the Organisation and Structure Review is to re-shape the organisation and that it will have to be managed within the parameters of current and future budget allocations. He emphasised that it is not being approached as a budget reduction exercise.

**Item 4.13: Planning for 2019/20**

9.6 Members noted that the Senior Management Team is working on drafting the Business Plan 2019/20 for the Board’s consideration.

**10. LIBRARIES NI ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS 2017/18 LNI 06.10.18**

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 2017/18**

10.2 The Chief Executive reported that the Northern Ireland Audit Office has completed the audit of the 2017/18 Accounts and is proposing to certify them without qualification and that no audit findings were highlighted in the Report to Those Charged with Governance in respect of the 2017/18 year.

10.3 Members noted the Provisional Report to Those Charged with Governance 2017/18.

**Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2017/18**

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, governance and control.
10.5 He confirmed that he derived great assurance from the Committee’s report on the work undertaken during the year and their opinion as to the adequacy and effectiveness of arrangements for internal control.

10.6 Members noted the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Annual Report 2017/18.

**Annual Report and Accounts 2017/18**

10.7 The Chief Executive drew Members’ attention to a minor amendment which had been made since the Accounts were circulated to Members. A footnote had been inserted to clarify the details of a one-off payment for additional duties and responsibilities.

10.8 Members congratulated staff on the exceptional outcome of the audit of the final accounts under such challenging circumstances.

10.9 On a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts 2017/18 for submission to the Comptroller and Auditor General for certification.

**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. **LIBRARIES NI OFFICIAL STATISTICS 2017/18**  

**LNI 07.10.18**

11.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Libraries NI: Statistical Bulletin, Participation in Core and Regular Library Activities in Northern Ireland 2017/18, noting that this is the sixth year in which official statistics have been published. He reported that Libraries NI is listed as a producer of official statistics and that the statistics comply with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. He advised that the statistics were produced by a statistician who is seconded to Libraries NI from the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency. He also drew attention to the new format of the publication which incorporates infographics.

11.2 Members noted that a total of 402,483 participants engaged in 29,286 core and regular activity sessions in 2017/18.

11.3 Members noted the substantial decrease in participation at Job Clubs. Ms T Ward, Assistant Director, explained that a recent change in how the Jobs and Benefits Office are targeting clients has impacted on participation and that Libraries NI is keeping its approach under review.
11.4 The Board were pleased to note the Official Statistics 2017/18 and commended all staff for their hard work in maintaining a high level of service under the current resource constraints.

12. MANAGEMENT REPORT

12.1 The Chief Executive referred to five management reports that had been circulated as follows.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2018/19 Quarter 1: April to June 2018

12.2 He reported that the majority of KPIs are on target for achievement. He highlighted that some KPI data relating to a number of libraries is incomplete due to the impact of industrial action which commenced in May 2018 and that alternative measures are being explored to have this data input to the statistical database system.

12.3 Members noted the report.

Business Plan Progress Report 2018/19 Quarter 1: April to June 2018

12.4 The Chief Executive reported that significant progress is being made in respect of the majority of Business Plan targets. It was noted that, as with the KPI report, some data relating to a number of libraries is incomplete due to the impact of industrial action. He also highlighted that resource constraints are likely to impact on the achievement of some targets.

12.5 Members noted the report.

Finance Report: August 2018

12.6 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for Capital and Recurrent spend to August 2018 which had been reviewed by the Business Support Committee at its meeting held on 27 September 2018. He confirmed that both capital and recurrent spend was on track for the year end. He explained a slight underspend in the capital report at the end of August due to a number of projects being in the procurement stage at present.

12.7 The Director of Business Support summarised the bids that have been submitted to the Department as part of October monitoring and highlighted that the outcome of the October monitoring round would have a significant impact on planning for the remainder of the year.

12.8 The Chairperson drew attention to the lengthy timeframe between the outcome of the October monitoring round and the next Board Meeting, emphasising that if the outcome was not favourable, immediate action would need to be taken in order to live within budget.

12.9 On a proposal by Professor B Cullen, seconded by Mr A McDowell, the Board agreed to delegate authority to the Senior Management Team to take the necessary emergency measures as a result of the outcome of the
October monitoring round in order to enable Libraries NI to live within budget for 2018/19. Any action taken would then be reported at the Board meeting in December.

12.10 Members noted the Finance Report.

Corporate Risk Register

12.11 The Director of Business Support presented the Corporate Risk Register which had been scrutinised by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at its meeting held on 10 October 2018. He confirmed that Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval subject to an amendment as reflected in the third bullet point at 12.12.

12.12 He drew attention to the following amendments since the risk register was last seen by the Board:

- Risk 1: participation and relevance, has an increased treated risk rating due to budget constraints and the Branch Library Manager industrial action
- Risk 4: corporate governance, has an additional threat re Board Members terms expiring with the residual and treated risk levels being revised upwards
- Risk 5: resources, has an increased risk rating due to uncertainty over in-year budget allocations and will be kept under close review
- Risk 6: planning, is at maximum risk as a result of the current political uncertainty and lack of information to inform decision-making.

12.13 On a proposal by Ms D Kenny, seconded by Councillor S McGuigan, the Board approved and adopted the Corporate Risk Register as at September 2018.

Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2018)

12.14 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 30 September 2018. He confirmed that it has been scrutinised by Members of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee at the meeting of the Committee held on 10 October 2018 and Members had been content to recommend the document to the Board for approval.

12.15 The Chief Executive drew particular attention to the Risk Management section which outlined the risks currently identified within the organisation. He also reported on 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 address each issue.

12.16 Members discussed the challenges facing Libraries NI and noted that the submission of the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement was timely in that it
provides additional evidence to support the bids to the October monitoring round and financial challenges being faced.

12.17 On a proposal by Councillor S McGuigan, seconded by Alderman S Martin, the Board approved the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement for the period ended 30 September 2018.

13. REPORT OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 10 OCTOBER 2018

13.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Councillor S McGuigan reminded Members that a meeting of the Committee had taken place on 10 October 2018, the formal minutes of which would be available at the next Board Meeting to be held on 13 December 2018. He confirmed that the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee recommended the approval of the following items to the Board:

- Annual Report and Accounts 2017/18
- Corporate Risk Register August 2018
- Bi-Annual Assurance Statement (April to September 2018)

(All of the above were approved earlier in the meeting).

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

- Internal Audit Activity Report – 12 Audit Reports have been issued since the last meeting of the Committee, in every case a satisfactory level of assurance was provided and there were no priority one recommendations made
- Internal Audit Outstanding Recommendations – since the last meeting of the Committee, 31 internal audit recommendations were made or were previously outstanding of which 18 have now been confirmed as implemented, leaving 13 currently outstanding. None of these 13 are a priority one recommendation and none were highlighted as ‘red’ i.e. being outstanding by more than four months.
- Internal Audit Annual Plan Progress Report - 35 Audits had been planned for the year with 20 completed to date, the target is on track for achievement.

13.3 Members congratulated Mr B Doherty, Head of Internal Audit, on the achievements of the Internal Audit Department and noted the report.

14. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

14.1 The Chairperson of the Services Committee, Councillor J Gray, presented the minutes of the Services Committee held on 13 September 2018 for
approval. She reported that the agenda for this meeting had deliberately been kept brief because of the Board Planning Workshop prior to the Services Committee meeting.

14.2 She highlighted the following reports that were received:

- the recent pilot evaluation of the impact of five of Libraries NI’s core programmes
- reading groups for adults

14.3 On a proposal by Councillor J Gray, seconded by Councillor C Mallaghan, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Services Committee held on 13 September 2018.

15. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2018

15.1 The Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, Mr A McDowell, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2018 and drew attention to the undernoted items.

Item 7: Statutory Equality and Good Relations Annual Progress Report 2017/18

15.2 Mr A McDowell referred to the report that demonstrates the progress made by Libraries NI in fulfilling its statutory equality and good relations duties and implementing the Equality Scheme and Disability Action Plan. He confirmed that the Business Support Committee recommended the approval of the report which could then be formally submitted to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. It was noted that the Business Support Committee welcomed the initiatives being undertaken and noted the extensive work being undertaken to allow Libraries NI to fulfill its statutory equality and good relations duties.

Item 9: Draft e3 Outline Business Case

15.3 Mr A McDowell referred to the draft e3 Outline Business Case (OBC) that was presented to the Business Support Committee and states the position up to the analysis of options. He confirmed that the Committee considered the draft OBC and recommended to the Board that, subject to the completion of the detailed cost analysis of options, updating the risks and benefits and identification of a preferred option that the OBC should be progressed for submission to the Department for Communities.

Item 20: Carryduff: Proposed Lease of Land

15.4 Mr A McDowell referred to a request by Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council to lease a parcel of land to the rear of Carryduff Library for community use. It was noted that the Council wished to lease the land for an initial three years and that under the terms of the lease they would have
responsibility for funding, implementing and managing the community based project. The Vice-Chairperson confirmed that the Business Support Committee recommended approval of the lease of this land.

15.5 Councillor J Gray and Alderman S Martin declared their positions as Councillors on the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council in the event of any perceived conflict of interest with the lease of land at Carryduff Library.

15.6 Mr A McDowell also highlighted that the term of service for the current Business Support Committee Chairperson was due to end in November 2018. He noted that in accordance with the rotation policy agreed by the Board, the newly elected Chairperson should be an independent Member and consequently the Vice-Chairperson should be a Council Member. He noted that this may be problematic given the current membership of the Committee.

15.7 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, seconded by Councillor G Keating, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the Business Support Committee held on 27 September 2018.

15.8 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, seconded by Alderman S Martin, the Board approved and adopted the Statutory Equality and Good Relations Annual Progress Report 2017/18.

15.9 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, seconded by Councillor G Keating, the Board approved and adopted the draft e3 Outline Business Case.

15.10 On a proposal by Mr A McDowell, Vice-Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board approved and adopted the Proposed Lease of Land at Carryduff Library.

16. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

16.1 There was no other business.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on Thursday 13 December 2018 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library.

18. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

18.1 The meeting ended at 12:35 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 11:50 am.

Signed: [Signature]

Date: 13/12/2018