

LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a Meeting of the Business Support Committee held on

Thursday 25 November 2021 at 10:30am via Video Link

PRESENT

Councillor Billy Webb MBE JP	Chairperson
Mr Neil Bodger	Vice Chairperson
Professor Bernard Cullen	Chairperson of the Board
Councillor Cheryl Brownlee	
Miss Linda Wilson	
Alderman Thomas Burns	

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Jim O'Hagan	Chief Executive
Mr Desi Miskelly	Director of Business Support
Mr Tim Neeson	Assets Manager
Ms Rita McNamee	Finance Manager
Mr Desi Curry	Head of ICU/ICT
Ms Jacqui McKinstry	Head of Human Resources

OBSERVERS

Ms Ciara Mallon-Toner	District Manager
Ms Linzie King	District Manager
Ms Koran Burns	District Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

The Chief Executive sent apologies advising that he would be late joining the meeting. Councillor Garath Keating was unable to attend.

2. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

- 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.

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 and observe Board and Committee meetings as part of their personal development and welcomed District Managers Ciara Mallon-Toner, Linzie King and Koran Burns.

- 3.2 The Chairperson advised that his term as Chairperson would end at the January 2022 Committee meeting, under the policy on rotation of Chairpersons it would be usual for the Vice Chairperson to be elected to the role and nominations would be sought for the role of Vice Chairperson from the elected members of the Committee.

4 DIRECTOR'S BUSINESS BSC.01.11.21

- 4.1 The Director of Business Support reported that following a bid to the October monitoring round £1.6 million had been allocated for the procurement of library stock, increasing the total 2021/22 stock budget to £2.65 million, an average spend of £1.46 per head of population.
- 4.2 The Director of Business Support advised that a bid for further additional stock funding had been submitted to the January monitoring round.
- 4.3 The Director of Business Support reported that discussions had taken place with DfC regarding the possibility of progressing to a three year budgeting cycle. While a positive outcome could not be guaranteed it was encouraging that more long term sustainable funding was being considered.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 BSC.02.11.21

- 5.1 On a proposal by Mr Neil Bodger, seconded by Alderman T Burns, the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 30 September 2021, which had been submitted to the Board on 14 October 2021, were approved.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 BSC.03.11.21

- 6.1 The Director of Business Support advised an update on the October monitoring round had been provided under item 4.1.
- 6.2 The Director of Business Support reported that the 2020/21 Draft Annual Report and Accounts had been approved by Libraries NI ARAC and Board, the accounts had been certified without qualification by the Comptroller and Auditor General and laid before the NI Assembly.

7 COMMITTEE/ BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2020 BSC.04.11.21

- 7.1 The Director of Business Support advised that the Committee was required to review its effectiveness annually, including the continued relevance of the Scheme of Delegation. It was proposed that the process should commence immediately with a view to completing it at the next Committee meeting on 27 January 2022.

7.2 The Chairperson advised that in the interim Members should direct any comments, responses or questions directly to the Director of Business Support who would collate responses for further discussion at the Committee's January 2022 meeting.

7.3 Members agreed to initiate the process immediately.

**8 SINGLE-USE PLASTIC REDUCTION ACTION PLAN BSC.05.11.21
OCTOBER 2021**

8.1 The Director of Business Support presented The Single-Use Plastic Reduction Action Plan, advised that the plan had been developed to identify actions, set timescales and provide guidance to support the reduction and eventual elimination of single-use plastics within Libraries NI's estate, business and procurement activity.

8.2 The Chairperson enquired regarding the impact of the plan on procurement contracts.

8.3 The Director of Business Support confirmed that implementing the plan would inevitably impact on some procurement activity but that as the plan formed part of a wider public sector approach work would be undertaken with CPD and the relevant CoPE to accommodate the changes within contracts.

8.4 Miss L Wilson thanked the Director for all the work on the plan and enquired how real progress could be measured, monitored and an achievable timescale set. Stating it would be necessary to balance setting realistic achievable targets/timescales while emphasising the importance of eliminating single-use plastics.

8.5 The Director of Business Support advised that the first step of the plan was an audit to establish a baseline, which would be completed by 31 December 2021. The targets set in the Plan although challenging were considered realistic and the Plan would be subject to review, tailoring and modification.

8.6 On a proposal by Mr N Bodger, seconded by Alderman T Burns the Single Use Plastic Reduction Action Plan was approved and recommended to the Board for approval.

**9 INFORMATION SYSTEMS e3 PROGRAMME UPDATE BSC.06.11.21
REPORT NOVEMBER 2021**

9.1 The Head of ICU/ICT presented the Information Systems E3 Programme Update Report.

9.2 Members noted the Report.

The Chairperson welcomed Angela Hodkinson, Boardroom Apprentice, to her first meeting of the Business Support Committee.

10 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT OCTOBER 2020 TO SEPTEMBER 2021 BSC.07.11.21

- 10.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Customer Feedback Report which detailed the volume of feedback received, the nature and focus of that feedback and included examples of feedback received and responses issued.
- 10.2 The Chairperson thanked the Director of Business Support for the report, noting that the new format provided a good overview of library users' experiences and the level of service provided.
- 10.3 Mr N Bodger commented that the Report was very good, it was interesting that people see libraries as a lighthouse in a storm, and requested that thanks be forwarded to the staff involved.
- 10.4 The Chief Executive advised that he would pass on the Committee's thanks in the Chief Executive's message to all staff on 26 November 2021.
- 10.5 Members noted the Report.

11 STATUTORY EQUALITY AND GOOD RELATIONS ANNUAL REPORT 2020/21 BSC.08.11.21

- 11.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Statutory Equality and Good Relations Report 2020/21, which was based on a template provided by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. It demonstrated the progress made in 2020/21 in implementing Libraries NI Equality Scheme commitments and Disability Action Plan, highlighting equality and good relations outcomes, impacts and good practice.
- 11.2 On a proposal by Alderman Thomas Burns, seconded by Miss L Wilson the Statutory Equality and Good Relations Annual Report 2020/21 was approved and recommended to the Board for approval.

12 FINANCE REPORTS

12.1 RESOURCE EXPENDITURE REPORT TO OCTOBER 2021 BSC.09.11.21

- 12.1 The Finance Manager presented the Resource Expenditure Report to October 2021, advising that projections indicated a full spend, a budget revision exercise had been carried out in October and would conclude in November to allow the budget to be refined.
- 12.2 The Chairperson enquired if the underspend in staffing was a result of a reduction in the use of agency staff and if there were time constraints on purchasing stock.
- 12.3 The Finance Manager advised the underspend on staffing reflected vacancies across the organisation for which recruitment exercises were ongoing and some delay as a result of Covid impacts in implementing the outworking's of the Organisational Structure Review.
- 12.4 The Director of Business Support advised the purchasing physical stock was impacted by delivery time, however it was possible buy stock through electronic mediums very quickly.

- 12.5 Mr N Bodger enquired what portion of other premises costs was spent on heating.
- 12.6 The Finance Manager advised that fuel oil and gas was approximately £440,000 equating to 8%, electricity costs were greater and both would be kept under review.
- 12.7 **CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REPORT TO OCTOBER 2021** **BSC.10.11.21**
- 12.8 The Finance Manager presented the Capital Expenditure Report.
- 12.9 Members noted the Reports.
13. **PROCUREMENT REPORT – TENDERS OVER £1,000** **BSC.11.11.21**
AND SINGLE TENDER ACTIONS OVER £1,000
- 13.1 The Finance Manager presented the Procurement Report informing the Committee of procurement activity over £1,000 and single tender actions for the period from 15 September 2021 to 12 November 2021.
- 13.2 Members noted the Report.
- 14 **SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT TO OCTOBER 2021** **BSC.12.11.21**
- 14.1 The Head of Human Resources presented the Sickness Absence Report detailing sickness absence levels to end of October 2021 which at 7.93 days FTE equivalent had increased on the previous month but continued to be below the target of 9.50 FTE days.
- 14.2 Members noted the Report.
- 15 **UPDATE REPORT – REDEVELOPMENT OF** **BSC.13.11.21**
ENNISKILLEN LIBRARY
- 15.1 The Assets Manager presented a Report updating the Committee on the progress of the project to redevelop Enniskillen Library, the design was at an advanced stage, the planning application had been submitted, tender drawings should be complete by 31 December 2021 and pending confirmation of the 2022/23 capital allocations by DfC it was planned to invite tender submissions in early 2022.
- 15.2 Members noted the Report.
- 16 **REPORT ON THE USE OF THE COMMON SEAL** **BSC.14.11.21**
- 16.1 The Assets Manager presented the Report on the Use of the Common Seal, detailing the eight occasions on which the Common Seal had been applied between September 2021 and November 2021.
- 16.2 Members noted the Report.

17 ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS.

17.1 There was no other notified business

18 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

18.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Business Support Committee would be held on Thursday 27 January 2022 at 10:30am.

19 MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

19.1 The meeting ended at 11:42am.

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

- Councillor C Brownlee joined the meeting at 10:34am
- Professor B Cullen joined the meeting at 10:36am
- The Chief Executive joined the meeting at 10:48am
- Councillor Garath Keating was unable to attend

Signed



Dated: 27 January 2022

During the current Covid-19 pandemic and with remote working in place, these minutes, which were approved at the Business Support Committee Meeting held on 27 January 2022, are published with an e-signature