

3. CHAIRPERSON'S BUSINESS

3.1 The Chairperson reported as follows:

- no observer from the Department would be present at today's Board Meeting
- a letter from Councillor G Keating had now been received confirming his resignation from the Libraries NI Board effective from 31 January 2022. Members thanked Councillor Keating for his sterling service to Libraries NI and wished him well for the future.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S BUSINESS

4.1 The Chief Executive referred Members to the paper which had been circulated, drawing attention to the undernoted items:

- COVID-19 Update
- Boardroom Apprentice 2022
- Draft Budget 2022 - 2025
- Building Inclusive Communities: Strategy One Year On – Key Achievements Brochure
- Libraries NI Revised Budget Allocations
- Partnership Working – some recent examples
- Our Wee Place – a children's book commissioned by the Northern Ireland Office and produced by a local author and a local illustrator
- Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon Borough Council City of Culture Bid
- New Year Honours 2022 – Edwin Johnston, Omagh, Frances Hunter, Irvinestown and Roger Armstrong from the Armstrong Storytelling Trust Charity
- Update to Board Extranet
- Assembly Questions
- Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21

4.2 Members noted that an invitation had been received from the Boardroom Apprentice Scheme for Libraries NI to continue as a Host Board in 2022. On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board Professor B Cullen, seconded by Councillor G Finlay, Members agreed that Libraries NI should continue to participate in the Boardroom Apprentice Scheme. The Chief Executive reported that Dr T Macaulay had been appointed to undertake an Impact Study in relation to the Boardroom Apprentice Programme and confirmed that a survey had been completed on behalf of Libraries NI.

4.3 Members noted that a VIP visit to Holywood Arches Library was planned to take place on 23 March 2022.

4.4 Members were reminded that elections to the Northern Ireland Assembly were scheduled to take place on 5 May. The pre-election period known as 'Purdah' would commence on 28 March 2022 and guidance would be issued to Members and staff prior to this date.

4.5 Members noted the published version of the Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21 which had been circulated to Members for information.

5. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE BOARD HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2021
LNI 01.02.22

5.1 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Mr N Bodger, the minutes of the Board Meeting held on 9 December 2021 were approved.

6. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 9 DECEMBER 2021
LNI 02.02.22

6.1 The Chief Executive drew attention to the circulated paper noting that an update would be provided on all matters arising except for those which were on the Agenda for further discussion.

Item 4.4: Chief Executive's Business

6.2 The Chief Executive reported that he had held informative discussions with Ms V Ingram, Executive Director, Ulster Garden Villages and would incorporate suggestions and approaches made by Ms Ingram into ongoing discussions regarding the Belfast Central Library project. The Chief Executive thanked Councillor Webb for his suggestion to contact Ulster Garden Villages.

7. DRAFT ANNUAL BUSINESS PLAN 2022/23
LNI 03.02.22

7.1 The Chief Executive presented the first draft of the Annual Business Plan, including proposed targets for 2022/23 and informed Members that the Business Plan had been drafted against the backdrop of uncertainty, the on-going challenges posed by the coronavirus pandemic and recent uncertainty around the timing and quantum of budget allocations for 2022/23.

7.2 It was noted that the draft Business Plan 2022/23 takes cognisance of the Libraries NI Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024, planning frameworks including the draft Programme for Government (PfG) and the Outcomes Delivery Plan and the DfC Strategy 2020 – 25: Building Inclusive Communities. Work on a new Strategic Programme for Government had taken place during 2021/22 but has not yet been completed and may not be in place or published by the time the Annual Business Plan 2022/23 is finalised.

7.3 The Chief Executive reported that the draft Business Plan targets for 2022/23 would be shared with the Department and may be revised and updated to take account of Departmental priorities. He also reported that notification of a funding allocation for 2022/23 has not yet been received and consequently Section 6: Financing Our Services has not been updated in the draft plan. The draft plan has

been developed on the basis of a similar level of baseline funding as that received for 2021/22 however, indications at this stage are that the financial situation in 2022/23 will be challenging and so it may be necessary to revisit certain targets and KPIs depending on the allocation ultimately received. Nevertheless, it is important that there is some structure to which staff can begin to plan with effect from 1 April 2022 to allow Service Plans to be developed.

- 7.4 It was noted that a further iteration of the Annual Business Plan would be brought to the Board for approval, when more information and clarification on the financial position for 2022/23 has been received.
- 7.5 Members expressed concern for the impacts of the uncertain funding position and raised queries in respect of targets relating to completion of the partnership agreement, sickness absence monitoring and measurement of library membership. The Chief Executive provided further information relating to these targets. It was noted the Board Effectiveness review could help to inform a high level OBA report later in the year.
- 7.6 Members noted the report.

8. BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2020/21 LNI 04.02.22

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 It was noted that at its meeting on 21 January 2022, the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee had completed an effectiveness review using the National Audit Office Self-Assessment Checklist.
- 8.3 Members reviewed the draft Action Plan which summarised actions arising from the completed effectiveness reviews.
- 8.4 The Chief Executive confirmed that he had provided a copy of the Board Effectiveness Review and the draft Action Plan to the Department and had received a response from Mr J McCord indicating that the Department was content with the work of the Board. He explained the Bi-Annual Assurance Statement and the Chairperson's Annual Assurance Statement provided a mechanism for confirming to the Department that the effectiveness process had been completed. The Chief Executive also reminded Members that the Libraries NI Head of Internal Audit had completed a review in July 2021 into the effectiveness of the Board and its Committees and had provided independent assurance on this matter.
- 8.5 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Councillor B Webb, Members confirmed that they were content that all reviews had been completed, agreed the draft Action Plan and concluded the review of effectiveness by confirming it is content that the Board and its Committees were operating effectively.

9. MANAGEMENT REPORT

LNI 05.02.22

- 9.1 The Chief Executive and the Director of Business Support briefed the Board on the Management Report.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) 2021/22: Quarter 3: October – December 2021

LNI 05.02.22 (i)

- 9.2 The Chief Executive drew attention to the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) Report for Quarter 3: October to December 2021. He explained that at the end of Quarter 3 progress continued to be made in respect of the achievement of targets. He drew attention to those targets which were coded 'red' or 'amber' reminding Members of the impact coronavirus and the various lockdowns had on library activities noting that at this stage in the year it was unlikely that some KPI targets would be achieved.

Finance Report: December 2021

LNI 05.02.22 (ii)

- 9.3 The Director of Business Support presented the Finance Reports for Capital and Recurrent Spend to December 2021 which had been reviewed by the Business Support Committee at its meeting held on 27 January 2022.
- 9.4 He drew attention to the Capital Report noting that a number of projects had now been completed and allocations fully spent. He reported that at year end an underspend of approximately £36,000 was currently projected and staff were working with the Department to re-allocate the underspend to other projects so that by the end of the financial year the projected underspend would be within the 1% tolerance limit.
- 9.5 He then drew Members' attention to the Recurrent Report explaining that underspend in the staffing budget continued due to a combination of reduced demand and delays in filling vacancies. He reported that it was projected that the recurrent budget would be fully spent at year end.

Corporate Risk Register

LNI 05.02.21 (iii)

- 9.6 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 21 January 2022 noting that there had been some changes to the levels of treated risks largely due to the timing of the report within the financial year i.e. the reduction in probability of the risk occurring as the end of the financial year approaches.
- 9.7 He discussed each of the risks in turn noting that risk levels remained high in Risk 1: Participation and Relevance and Risk 6: Planning. He drew attention to the on-going risks associated with the coronavirus/Covid-19 pandemic and explained that planning especially in the longer term still remained a challenge for the organisation.
- 9.8 On a proposal by Alderman T Burns, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board approved and adopted the Corporate Risk Register as at January 2022.

10. ORGANISATION AND STRUCTURES REVIEW: PROGRESS REPORT

LNI 06.02.22

- 10.1 The Chief Executive reminded Members that a Report providing a summary of the findings from the work on the Organisation and Structures Review had been brought to the Board at its meeting of 10 December 2020 and a summary had been provided to the Board on 9 December 2021.
- 10.2 He updated Members on work to date in respect of implementing recommendations from the Review, the challenges faced and how going forward structures within the organisation would be continually monitored, reviewed and amended to respond to the external environment and to meet business and service needs.
- 10.3 On a proposal by Dr M Ward, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board noted the progress that had been made in implementing recommendations arising from the Organisation and Structures review and confirmed its approval for the outworking of the Review and subsequently the overall structure.

11. MINUTES OF THE SERVICES COMMITTEE HELD ON 20 JANUARY 2022

LNI 07.02.22

- 11.1 The Vice-Chairperson of the Services Committee, Mr J Peto, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 20 January 2022.
- 11.2 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr J Peto, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Services Committee held on 20 January 2022.
- 11.3 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr J Peto, seconded by Dr M Ward, the Board approved and adopted the following:
- Scheme of Charges for Room Hire
 - Review of Community Information Policy
- 11.4 On a proposal by the Vice-Chairperson of the Committee, Mr J Peto, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board approved and adopted the following:
- Review of Filming Policy

12. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON 21 JANUARY 2022

LNI 08.02.22

- 12.1 The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, Councillor G Finlay, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 21 January 2022.
- 12.2 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Councillor G Finlay, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee held on 21 January 2022.

12.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Councillor G Finlay, seconded by Mrs D Kenny, the Board approved and adopted the following:

- Internal Audit Charter (Annual Review)
- NAO Audit and Risk Assurance Committee Effectiveness Checklist

**13. MINUTES OF THE BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE HELD ON
27 JANUARY 2022 LNI 09.02.22**

13.1 The Chairperson of the Business Support Committee, Mr N Bodger, presented the minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2022.

13.2 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Committee Mr N Bodger, seconded by Councillor B Webb, the Board approved and adopted the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee held on 27 January 2022.

13.3 On a proposal by the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen, seconded by Councillor B Webb, the Board approved and adopted the Election of Mr N Bodger as Chairperson of the Committee and Alderman T Burns as Vice-Chairperson.

13.4 On behalf of Members and Officers, the Chairperson of the Board, Professor B Cullen, thanked the outgoing Chairperson, Councillor B Webb for his service to the Business Support Committee.

14. STAFFING MATTER (IN COMMITTEE)

14.1 Officers with the exception of the Chief Executive and the Head of Human Resources withdrew from the meeting.

14.2 On a proposal by Councillor G Finlay, seconded by Alderman T Burns, the Board resolved to consider 'In Committee' the Staffing Matter (Item 14) and a Report on the Work of the Remuneration Committee (Item 15) and to resolve itself 'Out of Committee' following conclusion of discussion on these two matters.

14.3 The Chairperson reported that while in Committee the Chief Executive had briefed the Board on a matter relating to a senior member of staff.

15. REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (IN COMMITTEE)

15.1 The Chief Executive withdrew from the meeting for this item and the Chairperson reminded Members that the Board was still In Committee.

15.2 The Chairperson reported on the work of the Remuneration Committee during the 2021/22 year noting that the Committee had met on three occasions (1 July 2021, 9 December 2021 and 20 January 2022). He provided Members with an update on progress with the Department for Communities in relation to the Business Case for senior management pay and conditions; he also reported on 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 had operated effectively during 2020/21 and the current Scheme of Delegation remains fit for purpose and no amendments were required. The Effectiveness Review was accepted by the Board.

16. ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

16.1 There was no other notified business.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

17.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Board would take place on Thursday 28 April 2022 at 10:30 am in Lisburn City Library or remotely via video link.

18. MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

18.1 The meeting ended at 12:53 pm.

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

Mrs W Osborne joined the meeting at 10:35 am
Councillor G Finlay joined the meeting at 10:36 am
Councillor D Lyons joined at 11:20 am
Mrs J McKinstry joined the meeting at 12:22 pm

Councillor C Mallaghan left the meeting at 11:32 am and re-joined at 12:01 pm
Mrs W Osborne left the meeting at 11:54 am

Signed:



Professor Bernard Cullen,
Chairperson

Date:

28 April 2022
28 April 2022