

## LIBRARIES NI

### The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a Meeting of the Business Support Committee held on

Thursday 26 January 2023 at 10:30am

(Hybrid via Video Link and in person at Lisburn City Library)

VL – Attendance via video link

IP – Attendance in person

#### PRESENT

(IP) Alderman Thomas Burns	Chairperson
(IP) Miss Linda Wilson	Vice Chairperson
(VL) Professor Bernard Cullen	Chairperson of the Board
(VL) Councillor Billy Webb MBE JP	
(VL) Councillor Cheryl Brownlee	

(VL) Ms Stefani Millar	Boardroom Apprentice
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#### IN ATTENDANCE

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

#### OBSERVERS

(VL) Ms Ruth Watson	District Manager
(VL) Ms Bernadette Conway	District Manager

#### 1 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Mrs Wendy Osborne OBE

#### 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.

2.2 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 and observe Board and Committee meetings as part of their personal development and welcomed Ruth Watson, District Manager for Ards and North Down and Bernadette Conway, District Manager for Mid and East Antrim..

### **4 DIRECTOR'S BUSINESS BSC.01.01.23**

- 4.1 The Director of Business Support reported that following Departmental approval the NJC Pay Settlement for 2022/23 had been implemented, the uplift to salaries had been applied in December and arrears paid in January. In addition all staff will receive one additional day's annual leave entitlement from 01 April 2023.
- 4.2 The Director of Business Support advised that there was a lot of work going on at a departmental level around budget allocations for 2023/24, every suggestion indicated that it would be a very difficult year.
- 4.3 Miss L Wilson commented that there was speculation that overspend this year would be deducted from next year's budget allocation.
- 4.4 The Chief Executive commented that there was clearly a significant degree of pressure building on the block grant.

### **5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE BSC.02.01.23 HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2022**

- 5.1 Miss L Wilson requested the addition of the words "with concern" at 12.3.
- 5.2 On a proposal by Miss L Wilson, seconded by Councillor B Webb, the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee on 24 November 2022, which had been submitted to the Board on 08 December 2022, were approved subject to addition of the words "with concern" at 12.3.

### **6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE BSC.03.01.23 MEETING HELD ON 24 NOVEMBER 2023**

- 6.1 The Director of Business Support advised that there were two matters arising:-

- A. Committee/ Board Effectiveness Review 2022
- B. Statement of Corporate Social Responsibility (Review)

Both items would be addressed in detail in the main agenda under items 7 and 9 respectively.

## **7 COMMITTEE/ BOARD EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW 2022**

**BSC.03.01.23**

- 7.1 The Director of Business Support reported that the annual Board and Committee Effectiveness Review had commenced, the draft report and any action plan arising would need to be brought to the Board on 09 February 2023 to meet the reporting timeframe. Consequently the Committee were asked to:-
1. consider the current Scheme of Delegation, confirm that it remained relevant and appropriate or advise of revisions
  2. consider the draft Effectiveness Review with a view to agreeing a combined response representative of the view of the Committee, identifying any actions to be brought forward for inclusion in the Board Effectiveness Review Action Plan.
- 7.2 Ms S Millar enquired if the Scheme of Delegation at 2.1d should reference mitigating measures regarding spending.
- 7.3 The Director of Business Support advised that the Scheme set out the duty to monitor and to remain within Department spending limits.
- 7.4 Miss L Wilson commented that in her view the duty was to ensure that at the end of the year the Organisation remained within spending limits.
- 7.5 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Miss L Wilson, the Scheme of Delegation was confirmed as remaining relevant and appropriate and no revisions were required other than correcting a reference at 3.2 from DCAL to read Department of Communities.
- 7.6 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Miss L Wilson, the 2022/23 Business Support Committee Effectiveness Review Report was approved.
- 7.7 The Committee agreed that the Director of Business Support would compile a summary report to be forwarded to the Board for consideration at its February 2022 meeting.

A copy of the completed 2022/23 Committee Effectiveness Review is appended to these minutes for information

## **8 SPONSORSHIP POLICY REVIEW**

**BSC.05.01.23**

- 8.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Sponsorship Policy, in keeping with best practice and the scheduled review period the policy had been reviewed. No revisions or updates were proposed.
- 8.2 Miss L Wilson enquired if there was any feedback regarding the effectiveness of the Policy.

8.3 The Director of Business Support advised that due to COVID there had been no opportunity to test the policy.

8.4 On a proposal by Miss L Wilson, seconded by Councillor B Webb, the Sponsorship Policy was approved and recommended to the Board for adoption.

**9 STATEMENT OF CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY (REVIEW) BSC.06.01.23**

9.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Libraries NI Corporate Social Responsibility Statement, which provided a framework within which the Organisation seeks to undertake business in ways which take consideration of the interests of society and the impact of their activities on customers, suppliers, employees, communities and the environment. The Statement had been reviewed to reflect Members comments at the November 2022 meeting.

9.2 Miss L Wilson noted the amendment at 3.4 to include Board Members and questioned if this was appropriate as Board Members did not generally interact directly with customers.

9.3 The Director of Business Support advised that this amendment had been requested by Board Members.

9.4 Professor B Cullen commented that while Board Members don't typically interact with library users, they would occasionally receive correspondence from the public.

9.5 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Miss L Wilson, the Statement Of Corporate Social Responsibility was approved and recommended to the Board for adoption.

**10 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK REPORT 2022 BSC.07.01.23**

10.1 The Head of HR presented the Customer Feedback Report 2022 which detailed the volume of feedback received from library service users, the nature and the focus of the feedback and included examples of feedback received, the subject matter and responses provided for the period from 01 October 2021 to 30 September 2022. The feedback was a valuable point of contact and continued to inform services moving forward.

10.2 Councillor B Webb commented that at 8.6 the District Manager's response didn't seem to address the customer's query.

10.3 The Director of Business Support agreed that the response didn't appear to completely address the customer's query, however it was taken out of context and was only part of a one to one conversation. Given that the customer was a regular library user who had returned it was reasonable to assume that they were satisfied with the response.

- 10.4 Ms S Millar enquired if the compliments were forwarded to staff for encouragement and if any trends were noted when the statistics were compared against pre-COVID times.
- 10.5 The Head of HR advised that some of the compliments were reported directly to the relevant branch library, they were forwarded to Area and District Managers who were encouraged to feed these back to staff. Compliments and positive comments were also published on the staff intranet.
- 10.6 The Director of Business Support advised that COVID had impacted the volume of feedback, but the nature of feedback had not changed. Seasonal and societal changes were reflected such as reduced stock funding impacting the availability of books.
- 10.7 Councillor B Webb congratulated staff for achieving such a high level of compliments.

10.8 Members noted the Report.

**11 INFORMATION SYSTEMS E3 PROGRAMME BSC.08.01.23  
UPDATE REPORT JANUARY 2023**

11.1 The Head of ICU/ICT presented the Information Systems E3 Programme Update Report, advising Members on progress made. The transition from the e2 contract had been completed successfully, the new service regime was fully operational and significant improvements in performance were beginning to be seen.

11.2 Members noted the Report.

**12 FINANCE REPORTS**

**12.1 RESOURCE EXPENDITURE REPORT TO BSC.09.01.23  
DECEMBER 2022**

12.2 The Finance Manager presented the Resource Expenditure Report to December 2022, detailing expenditure incurred to date and the additional funding received in December which had alleviated pressures, consequently the projected year end position was much more positive.

12.3 Members noted the Report.

**12.4 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REPORT TO BSC.10.01.23  
DECEMBER 2022**

12.5 The Finance Manager presented the Capital Expenditure Report to December 2022.

12.6 Members noted the Report.

**13 PROCUREMENT REPORT – TENDERS OVER £1,000 & SINGLE TENDER ACTIONS OVER £1,000 BSC.11.01.23**

13.1 The Finance Manager presented the Procurement Report updating the Committee on procurement activity over £1,000 and Single Tender Actions for the period from 12 November 2022 to 16 January 2023.

13.2 Members noted the Report.

**14 SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT TO DECEMBER 2022 BSC.12.01.23**

14.1 The Head of HR presented the Sickness Absence Report for the 12 month period to the end of December 2022 advising that the composite sickness absence level in December was 12.81 FTE days, the target for 2022/23 being 9.5 FTE days or less. This was an increase of 1.9% on the October position. Anxiety, stress, depression and other psychiatric illnesses continued to be the main contributor to absences, HR had engaged with Inspire Workplaces with a view to providing information sessions to staff on mental health and wellbeing.

HR had appointed a new Health and Wellbeing Officer, continued to support the implementation of a Wellbeing at Work Strategy and was updating its training programme aimed at delivering absence management training to managers.

14.2 Members noted the Report.

**15 UPDATE REPORT – DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS FOR LIBRARY SERVICES IN ARMAGH BSC.13.01.23**

15.1 The Assets Manager presented the Update Report informing the Committee of an emerging potential partnership opportunity with Libraries NI and Armagh Observatory and Planetarium which may allow for the future development of a new public library facility in Armagh City. Currently there was a branch library and a heritage library in Armagh on two separate sites, both of the current sites had deficiencies.

15.2 Councillor B Webb enquired if the proposed location was convenient.

15.3 The Chief Executive advised that while this site was not in the city centre it was central and within walking distance of the city centre, was close to the Royal School, Armstrong Primary School, SRC, the Court House and Bus Station.

15.4 Members noted the Report.

**16 TENDER REPORTS**

**16.1 GREENISLAND LIBRARY REFURBISHMENT – APPOINTMENT OF MAIN CONTRACTOR BSC.14.01.23**

16.2 The Assets Manager presented the Report updating the Committee on progress on the appointment of a Main Contractor for the refurbishment work to be carried out at Greenisland Library.

16.3 Members noted the Report.

**16.4 LED LIGHTING AND PV PANEL INSTALLATION (VARIOUS LIBRARIES) – APPOINTMENT OF MAIN CONTRACTOR BSC.15.01.23**

16.5 The Assets Manager presented the Report updating the Committee on progress to appoint a main contractor to install LED lighting at Maghera, Castlederg, Cushendall, Ballycastle, Strathfoyle and Glengormley Libraries and install solar PV panels at Shantallow, Newry and Omagh Libraries.

16.5 Members noted the Report.

**16.6 BESSBROOK LIBRARY- REFURBISHMENT – DESIGN TEAM PROCUREMENT BSC.16.01.23**

16.7 The Assets Manager presented the Report updating the Committee on progress to appoint a design team to progress the design for the refurbishment of Bessbrook Library.

16.8 Members noted the Report.

**16.9 KILLYLEAGH LIBRARY – REFURBISHMENT- DESIGN TEAM PROCUREMENT BSC.17.01.23**

16.10 The Assets Manager presented the Report updating the Committee on progress to appoint a design team to progress the design for the refurbishment of Killyleagh Library.

16.11 Members noted the Report.

**17 REPORT ON THE USE OF THE COMMON SEAL BSC.18.01.23**

17.1 The Assets Manager presented the Report on the Use of the Common Seal, detailing the one occasion on which the Common Seal of the Northern Ireland Library Authority had been applied in the period between November 2022 and January 2023.

17.2 Members noted the Report.

**18 ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS**

18.1 There was no other notified business.

**19 DATE OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING**

19.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Business Support Committee would be held on Thursday 30 March 2023 at 10:30am.

**20 MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES**

20.1 The meeting ended at 11:55am.

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

- Ms R McNamee joined at 10:36am

Signed



Dated

30 March 2023

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***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 30 March 2023, are published with an e-signature***