

LIBRARIES NI

The Northern Ireland Library Authority

Minutes of a Meeting of the Business Support Committee held on

Thursday 30 March 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

(VL) Alderman Thomas Burns	Chairperson
(VL) Professor Bernard Cullen	Chairperson of the Board
(IP) Councillor Billy Webb MBE JP	
(VL) Councillor Cheryl Brownlee	
(VL) Mrs Wendy Osborne OBE	

(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
(IP) Mrs Jacqui McKinstry	Head of Human Resources
(VL) Mr Tim Neeson	Assets Manager
((VL) Mr Desi Curry	Head of ICU/ICT

OBSERVERS

(VL) Ms Christy Niblock	District Manager
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1 APOLOGIES FOR NON-ATTENDANCE

Miss Linda Wilson
Mrs Rita McNamee

Alderman T Burns advised that he would have to leave the meeting at 11:30am.

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 Christy Niblock, District Manager for Belfast.

4 DIRECTOR'S BUSINESS

- 4.1 The Director of Business Support advised that while he had hoped to present an update on the 2023/24 budget position as no information regarding the financial allocation for 2023/24 had been received it was not possible to do so. Authority to spend from 1 April had been requested from DfC.

5 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COMMITTEE HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2023 BSC.02.03.23

- 5.1 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Councillor C Brownlee, the minutes of the meeting of the Business Support Committee on 26 January 2023, were approved as a correct record of the meeting. It was reported that these minutes had been adopted by the Board at its meeting on 09 February 2023.

6 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 26 JANUARY 2023 BSC.03.03.23

- 6.1 The Director of Business Support reported that the Business Support Committee Effectiveness Review 2022 had been incorporated into the Board's response and the Committee/ Board Effectiveness Review 2022 process had been concluded.
- 6.2 The Director of Business Support advised that the reviewed Sponsorship Policy had been approved and adopted by the Board at its meeting on 9 February 2023.
- 6.3 The Director of Business Support reported that the reviewed Statement of Corporate Social Responsibility was approved and adopted by the Board on 9 February 2023.

7 BULLYING AND HARASSMENT POLICY REVIEW BSC.04.03.23

- 7.1 The Head of Human Resources presented the updated Bullying and Harassment Policy, which provided a framework to promote a respectful and harmonious working environment in which no employee feels bullied, threatened or intimidated. The existing policy had been reviewed, the updated policy had been subject to consultation with Trade Unions, legal advisors, Labour Relations Agency and Equality Commission for NI. Workplace investigation training had been organised for managers for April 2023. The associated procedures had been provided for information.

- 7.2 Mrs W Osborne commented that the formal procedure had been detailed comprehensively in the procedures, however information regarding informal procedures was less comprehensive and more clarity may be needed. Training for all staff would need to be provided to ensure confidence in the process.
- 7.3 The Head of Human Resources confirmed that refresher training would be provided to all staff in line with the policy review.
- 7.4 The Director of Business Support suggested that the procedures be reviewed looking at the language used at 6.1.
- 7.5 Professor B Cullen commented that while the procedures were very good more information regarding the informal procedure would help encourage staff to seek an informal resolution in the first instance. Professor Cullen proposed that he and the Head of Human Resources review the language at 6.1 and 7.2 of the procedures.
- 7.6 Ms S Millar enquired if there was an appeals process for the person against whom a complaint had been made.
- 7.7 The Head of Human Resources advised that there was an appeals process and it would be dealt with under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 7.8 Mrs W Osborne enquired if there were time limits within which a complaint should be raised.
- 7.9 The Head of Human Resources reported that legal advice was not to include a time limit.
- 7.10 On a proposal by Councillor B Webb, seconded by Mrs W Osborne, the Bullying and Harassment Policy was approved and recommended to the Board for adoption.

8 RECORDS MANAGEMENT POLICY REVIEW BSC.05.03.23

- 8.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Records Management Policy, advised that the policy had been reviewed in keeping with best practice and the scheduled review period, no revisions or updates were suggested.
- 8.2 On a proposal by Councillor C Brownlee, seconded by Councillor B Webb, the Records Management Policy was approved and recommended to the Board for adoption.

**9 2022/23 BUSINESS SUPPORT SERVICE PLAN BSC.06.03.23
PROGRESS REPORT**

- 9.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Progress Report which detailed progress to date on a range of targets as set out in the 2022/23 Business Support Service Plan. Actions and targets had been assigned a Red/Amber/Green status to reflect the position at March 2023.
- 9.2 Professor Cullen congratulated everyone on the number of targets which had been met, noted there were a couple of red indicators which were outside the Organisation's control and expressed concern regarding sickness absence.
- 9.3 Mrs W Osborne endorsed Professor Cullen's comments and advised that implementation of a Health and Wellbeing Strategy should be prioritised.
- 9.4 The Chairperson commented that the number of targets met was a great achievement.
- 9.5 Members noted the 2022/23 Business Support Service Plan Progress Report.

At 11:10am Alderman T Burns left the meeting and Councillor B Webb assumed the role of acting chairperson for the remainder of the meeting.

**10 2022/23 BUSINESS SUPPORT RISK REGISTER BSC.07.03.23
UPDATE REPORT**

- 10.1 The Director of Business Support present the 2022/23 Business Support Risk Register which had been updated to reflect the current business environment, to take account of mitigating actions implemented to date and new or emerging risks which have been identified in the period from November 2022.
- 10.2 Mrs W Osborne requested that the page 15; Risk 4 Resources be updated to include mitigating circumstances.
- 10.3 The Director of Business Support advised he would amend page 15.
- 10.4 Members noted the Business Support Risk Register 2022/23 Update Report.

**11 INFORMATION SYSTEMS E3 PROGRAMME BSC.08.03.23
UPDATE REPORT MARCH 2023**

- 11.1 The Head of ICU/ICT presented the Information Systems E3 Programme Update Report, advising Members of progress made. The Public Sector Shared Network implementation phase had been completed in March 2023. The design and implementation of the new Library Management System, new Finance and HR Systems were scheduled for completion in April 2023.

11.2 The Chief Executive advised that there would be significant changes with the implementation of the Library Management System, Finance and HR Systems, while there would be some level of disruption staff working in these areas had made considerable efforts to minimise the impact on normal business.

11.3 Members noted the Report.

12 FINANCE REPORTS

12.1 RESOURCE EXPENDITURE REPORT TO FEBRUARY 2023 BSC.09.03.23

12.2 The Director of Business Support advised that as the financial management and reporting systems were being replaced it was not possible to provide the usual detailed breakdown of resource expenditure. A narrative report was presented detailing expenditure incurred to date and projected year end position.

12.3 Members noted the Report.

12.4 CAPITAL EXPENDITURE REPORT TO FEBRUARY 2023 BSC.10.03.23

12.5 The Director of Business Support presented the Capital Expenditure Report to February 2023 advising of expenditure to date and projected year end position.

12.6 Members noted the Report.

13 PROCUREMENT REPORT – TENDERS OVER £1,000 AND SINGLE TENDER ACTIONS OVER £1,000 BSC.11.03.23

13.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Procurement Report updating the Committee on procurement activity over £1,000 and Single Tender Actions for the period from 17 January 2023 to 20 March 2023.

13.2 Members noted the Report.

14 SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT TO FEBRUARY 2023 BSC.12.03.23

14.1 The Head of Human Resources presented to the Sickness Absence Report to the end of February 2023, advising that the composite sickness absence level in February was 13.9 days (FTE equivalent), the target for 2022/23 being 9.5 FTE days or less. This was an 8.5% increase on the December 2022 position. The main contributor to absences continued to be anxiety, stress, depression and other psychiatric illnesses, including bereavement. From 18 April 2023 Occupational Health Clinics would be held in person, rather than virtually and six new Occupational Health Consultants had been appointed. A new Health & Wellbeing Officer had been appointed, a lot of

additional work was being carried out to support managers in understanding their responsibilities. Inspire Workplaces was available to support staff and would be providing mental health awareness training for managers. A Menopause Policy was in place, Health & Wellbeing staff were engaging with Ulster University regarding a Menopause Cafe. The Managing Attendance at Work Policy was due to be reviewed, following which training in managing sickness absence would be rolled out.

14.2 Members noted the Report.

15 REPORT ON THE USE OF THE COMMON SEAL BSC.13.03.23

15.1 The Chairperson 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 January 2023 and March 2023.

15.2 Members noted the Report.

16 ANNUAL BUSINESS SUPPORT COMMITTEE WORK PLAN 2023/24 BSC.14.03.23

16.1 The Director of Business Support presented the Annual Business Support Committee Work Plan to inform Members of meeting dates and proposed business items to be considered throughout 2023/24, the plan would be revised as necessary in response to developing business needs.

17 ANY OTHER NOTIFIED BUSINESS

17.1 There was no other notified business.

18 DATE OF THE NEXT SCHEDULED MEETING

18.1 Members noted that the next scheduled meeting of the Business Support Committee would be held on Thursday 25 May 2023 at 10:30am.

18.2 The acting Chairperson, Councillor B Webb, advised that as his term as a Board member would end shortly this would be his final meeting of the Business Support Committee and commented that it had been a pleasure to work with the Committee.

19 MEMBERS ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE TIMES

19.1 The meeting ended at 11:40am.

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

- Alderman T Burns left the meeting at 11:10am

Signed Juelc Kust

Date 25 May 2023

