

Libraries NI

Board Operating Framework

Approved by Libraries NI Board 6 July 2023

Updated March 2025 to reflect substitution of Management Statement and Financial Memorandum by 2024 Partnership Agreement



Libraries NI

Board Operating Framework

1. Introduction

- 1.1 DAO (DFP) 06/13 (*Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice 2013*), although written for Departments, concentrates throughout on key principles which have wider application for other parts of the public sector. Arms' Length Bodies (ALBs) are encouraged to consider and adopt the practices set out in the Code of Good Practice ('the Code') wherever it is relevant and practical to do so and on the basis of 'comply or explain' i.e. if an ALB proposes to depart significantly from the guidance set out in the Code then it should explain and describe what alternative governance measures have been put in place which have similar effect to the principles of the Code. Governance Statements should include an explanation for any departures from the Code. Libraries NI routinely departs from the specifics of the Code in relation to matters pertaining to the Board as, unlike Departments, Libraries NI Board is made up of non-executives.
- 1.2 The Code includes a model Board Operating Framework to be used to document a Board's understanding of its role and responsibilities, including a formal schedule of matters reserved to the Board for discussion/decision i.e. not delegated to committees and/or officials.
- 1.3 This Board Operating Framework (BOF) for Libraries NI has been prepared in line with the principles of the Code and taking account of Paragraph 9, Schedule 1 of the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 ('the Act') which provides that:
- the Authority [i.e. the Board of the Northern Ireland Library Authority known as Libraries NI] may, to such extent as it may determine, delegate any of its functions to any committee of the Authority or any employee of the Authority
 - any committee of the Authority may, to such extent as the committee may determine, delegate any functions of the committee to any employee of the Authority.
- 1.4 The BOF should be read in conjunction with the Act, as well as the Partnership Agreement between Libraries NI and the Department for Communities¹, Managing

¹ The Partnership Agreement came into effect in May 2024 and replaced the Management Statement and Financial Memorandum (MSFM) which was previously in place.

Public Money Northern Ireland (MPMNI) and Standing Orders for the Conduct of Meetings of the Board and its Committees.

- 1.5 The BOF will be reviewed every three years or more frequently if the Board decides that it is appropriate to do so in light of emerging policy, guidance or strategic or operational considerations, including where there is a change of circumstances or a change of key personnel, and will be amended accordingly.

2. Libraries NI (The Northern Ireland Library Authority)

- 2.1 The Libraries Act (N Ireland) 2008 sets out the functions, duties and powers of Libraries NI subject to relevant constraints and approvals, including where necessary, approvals from the sponsor Department, the Department for Communities (DfC) and other relevant government departments. The primary duty of Libraries NI, as set down in the Act, is to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service for persons living, working or studying in Northern Ireland.

- 2.2 *Delivering Tomorrow's Libraries* is the Department's overarching policy framework for the public library and includes its vision for the service i.e. '*a flexible and responsive public library services which provides a dynamic focal point in the community and assists people to fulfil their potential*'. The policy framework also includes a set of Public Library Standards, which were revised in 2014 and on which the Department reports annually.

- 2.3 Libraries NI's vision is for:
a visible, accessible and inclusive library service at the heart of communities, enhancing lives and valued by all.

- 2.4 Libraries NI's mission is:
connecting people with information, ideas and experiences to foster lifelong learning, inspire curiosity, provide enjoyment and strengthen communities.

- 2.5 The Partnership Agreement sets out the broad framework within which Libraries NI is required to operate. It requires Libraries NI to:
 - focus on the customer through its management, culture and staff development strategies
 - proactively develop targeted actions relevant to priority groups,

- work in partnership with other organisations to support key government priorities, including literacy, health and wellbeing, employability, community cohesion, neighbourhood regeneration and economic development and to enhance cultural experiences
 - ensure value for money is incorporated within its activities
 - continue to achieve increased innovation and efficiencies
 - have due regard to the need to promote positive attitudes toward people with disabilities and to encourage their participation in public life.
- 2.6 The objectives, key targets and performance measures of Libraries NI, which incorporate Ministerial priorities, are agreed with the Department through the corporate and annual business planning process. Corporate and annual business planning is based on financial planning figures contained in the Comprehensive Spending Review, with final budget allocations for the year confirmed following Ministerial approval of the Business Plan.

3. The Board of Libraries NI

- 3.1 The Board of Libraries NI consists of a Chairperson and not more than 18 other members appointed by the Department in line with the Code of Practice issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments and Schedule 1, Paragraph 2 of the Act. In making appointments to the Board, the Department is required, as far as is practicable, to secure that:
- at any time, a majority of members are councillors (within the meaning of the Local Government Act (Northern Ireland) 1972; and
 - each member has experience in a field of activity relevant to the discharge of the functions of Libraries NI.
- 3.2 The Board has corporate responsibility for ensuring that Libraries NI fulfils its statutory responsibilities and the aims and objectives set by the Department and approved by the Minister and for promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of financial, staff and other resources. The Board operates collectively, providing advice on strategic issues affecting Libraries NI's performance and its long-term success; constructively challenges the Chief Executive and the senior management team on planning, target setting and performance; and exercises a challenge and scrutiny role to ensure the highest standards of corporate governance and internal control.

3.3 The Board has particular responsibility for:

- establishing the overall strategic direction of Libraries NI within the policy, priorities and resources framework determined by the Minister and the Department
- agreeing the Libraries NI Corporate Plan and annual Business Plan for submission to the Department for Ministerial approval
- ensuring that the Department is kept informed of any changes which are likely to impact on the strategic direction of Libraries NI or on the attainability of its targets, and determining the steps needed to deal with such changes
- agreeing annual budgets, based on the allocations made by the Department, and reviewing on a regular basis financial information concerning the management of Libraries NI to ensure that financial targets are met
- satisfying itself in relation to the appropriateness of risk management and other governance and control arrangements and providing the required assurances to the Department
- agreeing the Libraries NI Annual Report and Accounts
- ensuring compliance with statutory and administrative requirements for the use of public funds and that the Board operates within the limits of its statutory authority, any delegated authority agreed with the Department and in accordance with any other conditions relating to the use of public funds
- ensuring that, in reaching decisions, account is taken of all relevant guidance issued by the Department of Finance
- supporting the Libraries NI Accounting Officer in the discharge of obligations set out in MPMNI for the proper conduct of business and the maintenance of ethical standards.

3.4 Individual Board members are required, at all times, to act in accordance with their wider corporate responsibilities and in the public interest, in keeping with the Nolan Principles of Public Life and the Code of Conduct for Board Members of Libraries NI (Appendix 1).

3.5 All Board Members are required to undertake corporate governance training. The Chairperson and Chief Executive will also ensure that Board Members, as part of their induction, are briefed on their roles and responsibilities as Board Members and on the work of Libraries NI.

- 3.6 The Board meets at least 6 times per year. Meetings are held in public, unless determined otherwise by the Board in line with Standing Orders. Members of the public wishing to attend meetings held via an electronic platform must request prior access to do so. Minutes are produced for each Board meeting and are published on the Libraries NI website when they have been approved by the Board. Draft copies of minutes are made available to the Department within 15 working days of the meeting, where possible.
- 3.7 The agenda for each Board meeting, which is published in advance of meetings, is agreed in advance by the Chairperson and includes, as a minimum, the following items:
- Apologies
 - Declaration of Interests
 - Chairperson's Business
 - Chief Executive's Business
 - Review and ratification of the minutes of the previous Board meeting
 - A report on matters arising from the previous meeting
 - Minutes of Committee meetings held in the period since the last Board meeting, recording decisions taken by the Committee on matters delegated to the Committee and recommendations for Board consideration and approval in relation to other relevant matters e.g. strategic and operational policies, budget allocations, progress and status of mission critical projects
 - Other substantive business items.
 - Any other business
 - Date of next meeting.
- 3.8 Copies of the agenda for Board meetings, together with all relevant papers, are provided to the Department in advance of the meeting. The Department is invited to send a representative to Board meetings.
- 3.9 On a quarterly basis, the Board considers a Management Report, providing information on:
- progress in relation to Key Performance Indicators
 - the up-to-date financial position
 - corporate risks and mitigating action.

- 3.10 The Board reviews and approves the Chief Executive's Bi-Annual Assurance Statement.
- 3.11 The Senior Management Team (i.e. the Chief Executive, Director of Business Support and Director of Library Services) attend meetings of the Board in an advisory capacity but are not members of the Board.

4. The Chairperson of the Board

- 4.1 The Chairperson of the Board is appointed by the Minister/Department in line with the Libraries Act (Northern Ireland) 2008 and the Code of Practice issued by the Commissioner for Public Appointments. The Vice Chairperson of the Board is elected by Board Members. In the absence of the Chairperson, the Vice Chairperson chairs Board meetings.
- 4.2 The Chairperson is responsible to the Minister/Department for ensuring that Libraries NI's policies and actions support the wider strategic policies of the Minister/Department and that the organisation's affairs are conducted with probity. Communication between the Board and the Minister will normally be through the Chairperson who will ensure that the other Board Members are kept informed of such communications.
- 4.3 The Chairperson shares with other Board members the corporate responsibilities set out in paragraph 3.2 above and has a particular leadership responsibility on the following matters:
- formulating the Board's strategy
 - ensuring that the Board, in reaching decisions, takes proper account of guidance provided by the Minister and the Department
 - promoting the efficient, economic and effective use of staff and other resources
 - encouraging high standards of propriety
 - representing the views of the Board to the general public
 - ensuring that the Board meets at regular intervals throughout the year and that the minutes of meetings accurately record the decisions taken and, where appropriate, the views of individual Board members
 - reporting formally to the Minister and the Permanent Secretary at pre-arranged Partnership meetings.

4.4 The Chairperson is also responsible for:

- ensuring that all Board members, when taking up office, are fully briefed on the terms of their appointment and on their duties, roles and responsibilities
- ensuring that all Board members receive appropriate induction training, including on the financial and reporting requirements of public sector bodies
- ensuring that a Code of Practice for Board Members is in place, based on the Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments: Code of Good Practice (NI) 2013
- advising the Department on the needs of the Board when vacancies arise for Board members, with a view to ensuring a proper balance of expertise
- approaching the Department for approval to co-opt a person on a temporary basis to a Committee, who is not a member of the Board of Libraries NI, if such action becomes necessary to address any specialist or professional need
- assessing the performance of individual Board members in accordance with Departmental practice and guidance
- ensuring that the Board undertakes a review of its effectiveness on an annual basis, with independent input at least every three years, and that the results are acted upon
- developing an effective working relationship with the Chief Executive and other senior staff, overseeing the way in which they implement Board decisions, agreeing annual performance targets for the Chief Executive and advising the Board through its Remuneration Committee on the Chief Executive's annual performance, in consultation with the Department as necessary.

5. Decisions and Reporting

5.1 This section identifies those matters that the Board has determined shall be:

- reserved for a decision by the Board
- delegated to the Chairperson
- delegated to a Committee of the Board
- delegated to the Chief Executive. Where appropriate and within the constraints of his/her role as Accounting Officer, the Chief Executive may delegate responsibilities to other members of staff.

- 5.2 In delegating matters to a Committee of the Board or the Chief Executive, the Board will satisfy itself that adequate reporting and accountability arrangements are in place to allow it to continue to oversee the exercise of those delegated powers.
- 5.3 Notwithstanding that the Board may delegate functions to any of its Committees or to the Chief Executive, it shall have the power at any time, in full session, to determine any matter within its statutory powers, that appears to it to be conducive or incidental to the discharge of its functions, including any matter otherwise delegated to a Committee or to the Chief Executive.
- 5.4 In carrying out its functions the Board, its Committees and the Chief Executive and officers to whom responsibility has been delegated will comply with statutory and legislative regulations for the use of public funds.

Matters Reserved to the Board

- 5.5 The matters referred to in paragraphs 5.6–5.11 below will be reserved for decision by the Board, subject to necessary approvals by the Department, where applicable and as identified in the Libraries Act and / or the Partnership Agreement.

5.6 Regulation and Control

- 5.6.1 Agree the Partnership Agreement;
- 5.6.2 Approve an appropriate Code of Practice for Board Members to ensure that high standards of corporate governance are observed at all times;
- 5.6.3 Approve Standing Orders for the conduct of meetings of the Board and its Committees, including any amendments to Standing Orders (Appendix 2);
- 5.6.4 Approve byelaws regulating the use of library facilities and the conduct of persons in library premises and for enabling officers to exclude or remove from library premises any person who contravenes the byelaws (Appendix 3);
- 5.6.5 Approve the undertaking of commercial activities, as defined in the Libraries Act, which the Board deems to be conducive to the exercise of its duties;
- 5.6.6 Establish such Committees as it deems appropriate for the efficient conduct of Board business, to include, as a minimum, an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;

- 5.6.7 Approve the Board Operating Framework and Schemes of Delegation, specifying the duties and responsibilities of all Committees of the Board together with the procedures to be followed by Committees;
 - 5.6.8 Determine and approve the composition and membership of Committees;
 - 5.6.9 Dissolve a Committee or alter its membership at any time, save if it dissolves the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, it must immediately appoint a new one;
 - 5.6.10 Receive reports from the Committees and consider and, where appropriate, make decisions on recommendations of Committees where the Committees do not have delegated powers;
 - 5.6.11 Appoint, with Departmental approval as required, co-opted members to the Board or its committees;
 - 5.6.12 Review the Board Operating Framework, the Committee structure and the Schemes of Delegation to Committees at least biennially;
 - 5.6.13 Assess its effectiveness and the effectiveness of its Committees on an annual basis;
 - 5.6.14 Ratify urgent decisions taken by the Chairperson of the Board (or in his absence by the Vice Chairperson) in accordance with Standing Orders;
 - 5.6.15 Appoint Board Members, representing Libraries NI, to other bodies.
- 5.7 Planning and Performance
- 5.7.1 Approve the Libraries NI Corporate Plan, including the Vision, Mission, Aims and Corporate Objectives;
 - 5.7.2 Approve the Libraries NI Annual Business Plan and monitor its delivery;
 - 5.7.3 Agree and monitor Key Performance Indicators;
 - 5.7.4 Approve the Libraries NI Annual Report and Accounts, including the Governance Statement.
- 5.8 Policy and Strategy
- 5.8.1 Approve strategic policies relating to the functions, duties and powers of Libraries NI, including any recommendations relating to the need for new policies or the review or revision of existing policies, emanating from any Board Committee;
 - 5.8.2 Approve capital, minor works and planned maintenance programmes;
 - 5.8.3 Approve the opening of new, or the closure of existing, library premises;

- 5.8.4 Approve major new areas of service delivery or the discontinuation of existing major areas of service delivery which may have significant reputational risk implications.

5.9 Financial Arrangements

- 5.9.1 Approve annual recurrent and capital budgets and receive regular monitoring reports on spend against profile;
- 5.9.2 Approve a scheme of fees and charges and any amendments to the scheme;
- 5.9.3 Approve acceptance or otherwise of any gift, bequest or similar donation to Libraries NI, that meets the assets threshold, taking account of any associated costs in doing so or any conflicts of interest arising;

5.10 Risk Assurance Arrangements

- 5.10.1 Appoint an Audit and Risk Assurance Committee;
- 5.10.2 Following consideration by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, approve Corporate Governance policies and the Risk Management Strategy;
- 5.10.3 Receive reports and recommendations from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and take appropriate action;
- 5.10.4 Receive an annual report from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, timed to support the finalisation of the Annual Accounts and the Governance Statement, summarising its conclusions from the work it has done during that year;
- 5.10.5 Review corporate risks, at least on a quarterly basis and receive reports from the Chief Executive and the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee in relation to the management of risk;
- 5.10.6 Approve the arrangements for internal audit, including any resourcing matters;
- 5.10.7 Following consideration by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee, review and approve the Chief Executive's Bi-Annual Assurance Statement;
- 5.10.8 Approve the Board's Annual Assurance Statement.

5.11 Staffing

- 5.11.1 Appoint a new Chief Executive of Libraries NI;

- 5.11.2 Appoint new second and third tier officers² of Libraries NI;
- 5.11.3 Approve the overall organisational structure, and the processes and procedures required to fill posts in the structure and facilitate the discharge of the business of Libraries NI;
- 5.11.4 Approve arrangements relating to the redundancy or early retirement of officers at second or third tier level;
- 5.11.5 Approve a Code of Conduct for Staff.

Delegation to the Chairperson of the Board

- 5.12 The Chairperson has delegated responsibility in relation to the following matters:
 - 5.12.1 Determining the agenda for Board meetings, in conjunction with the Chief Executive;
 - 5.12.2 Convening Board meetings;
 - 5.12.3 Deciding all questions of order, relevancy, competency and conduct arising at a meeting of the Board;
 - 5.12.4 The interpretation of Standing Orders or in the event of any situation arising at a meeting of the Board or its committees not being covered by Standing Orders, on the procedure to be adopted;
 - 5.12.5 Authorising the receipt of a deputation at a Board or committee meeting;
 - 5.12.6 Acting as the designated media spokesperson for the Board (shared with the Chief Executive);
 - 5.12.7 Authorising such action to be taken on behalf of Libraries NI as may be required with respect to matters which are of an urgent nature, provided that all such action is reported to the Board at its next scheduled meeting;
 - 5.12.8 Acting as co-signatory with the Chief Executive on any document to which the seal of Libraries NI must be applied;
 - 5.12.9 Acting as co-signatory with the Chief Executive for relevant sections of the Annual Report and Accounts;
 - 5.12.10 Establishing annual targets for, and undertaking the annual performance appraisal of, the Chief Executive;
 - 5.12.11 Undertaking disciplinary action relating to the Chief Executive.

² 2nd and 3rd Tier Officer refers to positions attracting an annual salary at or above pay scale point 58 as per pay scale at April 2020 (generally known as Director or Head of Service).

Delegation to Board Committees

- 5.13 In order to assist with the effective discharge of its responsibilities, the Board has established the following Committees and agreed a Scheme of Delegation for each Committee specifying the duties and responsibilities to be discharged and the procedure to be followed by the Committee.
- 5.13.1 Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
The Scheme of Delegation for the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee is included as Appendix 4.
- 5.13.2 Business Support Committee
The Scheme of Delegation for the Business Support Committee is included as Appendix 5.
- 5.13.3 Services Committee
The Scheme of Delegation for the Services Committee is included as Appendix 6.
- 5.13.4 Remuneration Committee
The Scheme of Delegation for the Remuneration Committee is included as Appendix 7.
- 5.13.5 Information System Committee
The Scheme of Delegation for the Information Systems Committee is included as Appendix 8.

Role of the Chief Executive

- 5.14 The Chief Executive is designated by the Principal Accounting Officer (the Permanent Secretary of the sponsor Department) as the Accounting Officer for Libraries NI and accordingly has personal responsibility for:
- 5.14.1 Safeguarding the public funds allocated to Libraries NI;
- 5.14.2 Ensuring propriety and regularity in the handling of those public funds;
- 5.14.3 The day-to-day operation and management of Libraries NI;
- 5.14.4 Maintaining administrative structures which enable the Board and the organisation as a whole to discharge their statutory responsibilities efficiently and effectively;
- 5.14.5 Ensuring that all legitimate decisions of the Board are implemented.
- 5.15 In his/her role as Accounting Officer the Chief Executive has responsibility for the following matters:

Planning and Monitoring

- 5.15.1 Establishing, in agreement with the Department, the Libraries NI corporate and business plans in support of the Department's wider strategic aims and, objectives, priorities and targets and Programme for Government objectives and targets;
- 5.15.2 Informing the Department of progress in helping to achieve its policy objectives and demonstrating how resources are used to achieve those objectives;
- 5.15.3 Ensuring that timely forecasts and monitoring information on performance and finance are provided to the Department and the Board; that the Department is notified promptly if an overspend or underspend is likely and that corrective action is taken; that any significant problems, whether financial or otherwise, and whether detected by internal audit or by other means, are notified to the Department in a timely fashion.

Advising the Board

- 5.15.4 Advising the Board on the discharge of its responsibilities in accordance with the Libraries Act, the Partnership Agreement and any guidance issued from time to time by the sponsor Department or the Department of Finance;
- 5.15.5 Advising the Board on Libraries NI's performance compared to its aims, objectives and targets;
- 5.15.6 Notifying the Board of any settlements exceeding £10,000 per case, which require Departmental approval
- 5.15.7 Ensuring that financial considerations are taken into account by the Board at all stages of the decision making process and that standard financial appraisal techniques are followed appropriately
- 5.15.8 Taking action, as set out in MPMNI, if the Board or its Chairperson are contemplating a course of action involving a transaction which the Chief Executive considers would infringe the requirements of propriety or regularity or does not represent prudent or economical administration, efficiency or effectiveness

Managing Risk and Resources

- 5.15.9 Ensuring that a system of risk management is maintained to inform decisions on financial and operational planning and to assist in achieving objectives and targets;

- 5.15.10 Notifying the Board and the Department of any matters that threaten the regularity, propriety or value-for-money with which Libraries NI carries out its business;
- 5.15.11 Notifying the Board and the Department of any significant issues which may impact on Libraries NI's medium-term capability and significant risks to the delivery of aims, objectives and targets, along with any mitigating action;
- 5.15.12 Ensuring that an effective system of programme and project management and contract management is maintained;
- 5.15.13 Ensuring compliance with Northern Ireland Procurement Policy;
- 5.15.14 Ensuring that all public funds made available to Libraries NI, including any income and receipts are used for the purpose intended by the Assembly, and that such monies, together with Libraries NI's assets, equipment and staff, are used economically, efficiently and effectively;
- 5.15.15 Ensuring that appropriate internal management and financial controls are maintained, including effective measures against fraud and theft;
- 5.15.16 Maintaining a comprehensive system of internal delegated authorities, together with a system for regularly reviewing compliance with these delegations;
- 5.15.17 Ensuring that effective Human Resource policies are maintained;
- 5.15.18 Providing the Department with a copy of the Corporate Risk Register on an annual basis, with updates for review at Partnership meetings.

Accounting for Libraries NI's Activities

- 5.15.19 Signing the Annual Accounts and be responsible for ensuring that proper records are kept relating to the Accounts and that the Accounts are properly prepared and presented in accordance with any directions issued by the Minister, the Department or the Department of Finance;
- 5.15.20 Signing a Statement of Accounting Officer's responsibilities for inclusion in the Annual Report and Accounts;
- 5.15.21 Signing a Governance Statement for inclusion in the Annual Report and Accounts;
- 5.15.22 Ensuring that effective procedures for handling complaints about Libraries NI are established and made widely known within the organisation;

- 5.15.23 Acting in accordance with the Partnership Agreement and other instructions and guidance issued from time to time by the sponsor Department and the Department of Finance;
- 5.15.24 Giving evidence, if summoned before the Public Accounts Committee on the use and stewardship of public funds by Libraries NI;
- 5.15.25 Ensuring the effective implementation of the Section 75 statutory duties and that there is a commitment to the Equality Commission's Guide for Public Authorities;
- 5.15.26 Ensuring compliance with all legislative requirements including the Data Protection Act 1998, the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Protection of Children and Vulnerable Adults (Northern Ireland) Order 2003 and the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Corporate Governance

- 5.15.27 Advising the Board on compliance with the Corporate Governance Code;
- 5.15.28 Providing assurance regarding the stewardship of the funds made available to Libraries NI

People

- 5.15.29 Establishing and keeping staffing levels under review, ensuring that staff are developed and trained to enable them to make the maximum contribution to the success of Libraries NI;
- 5.15.30 Fostering good industrial relations through the process of consultation with trades unions and effective communication with all staff, making available a system of grievance and appeals procedures on all matters of conduct, discipline and inefficiency
- 5.15.31 Developing new working arrangements to meet the needs of Libraries NI.

Whole of Government Accounts

- 5.16 For the purpose of Whole of Government Accounts, the Chief Executive has been appointed by the Department of Finance as the Libraries NI Consolidation Officer. The Chief Executive may delegate operational responsibility for compliance with this requirement to the Finance Manager or Director of Business Support.

Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman

- 5.16 The Chief Executive is the Principal Officer for handling cases involving the Northern Ireland Public Services Ombudsman.

Delegation to the Chief Executive

- 5.18 The Board has delegated responsibility to the Chief Executive for the following matters:

Regulation and Control

- 5.18.1 In conjunction with the Chairperson of the Board, determining the agenda for Board meetings;
- 5.18.2 Signing the Partnership Agreement, following consultation with the Board;
- 5.18.3 Acting as signatory, on behalf of Libraries NI, on any document which does not require the seal of Libraries NI to be applied;
- 5.18.4 Acting as co-signatory with the Chairperson of the Board, as required on any document to which the seal of Libraries NI must be applied;
- 5.18.5 Such action as may be required to ensure compliance with the Libraries NI byelaws;
- 5.18.6 The maintenance and publication of a Register of Interests of Board Members and relevant staff;
- 5.18.7 The maintenance and publication of a Register of Gifts and Hospitality provided or received by Board Members and relevant staff;
- 5.18.8 The handling of all complaints in line with the agreed policies and associated procedures;
- 5.18.9 Designated media spokesperson for Libraries NI (shared with the Chairperson of the Board).

Planning and Performance

- 5.18.10 Devising annual Key Performance Indicators and ensuring appropriate monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place;
- 5.18.11 The provision of timely and accurate information and analysis to the Board and its Committees to facilitate the decision-making process;
- 5.18.12 Preparation of the draft Annual Report and Accounts, including the Governance Statement.

Policy and Strategy

- 5.18.13 Developing and reviewing strategic policies relating to the functions, duties and powers of Libraries NI for approval by the Board and ensuring that processes and procedures are in place to facilitate effective policy implementation;
- 5.18.14 Preparing capital, minor works and planned maintenance programmes for approval by the Board;
- 5.18.15 Preparing plans for the opening of new, or the closure of existing, library premises, for approval by the Board
- 5.18.16 Recommending major new areas of service delivery, or the discontinuation of major areas of service delivery, for approval by the Board

Financial Arrangements

- 5.18.17 Preparing annual recurrent and capital budgets for DEL (Departmental Expenditure Limits) and AME (Annually Managed Expenditure) for approval by the Board and ensuring that effective monitoring and reporting arrangements are in place;
- 5.18.18 Keeping under review the operation of the scheme of fees and charges, including commercial activities approved by the Board and recommending changes to the scheme;
- 5.18.19 Approval of write-off losses, special payments and overpayments of salaries, wages and allowances in accordance with the delegated limits specified in the Partnership Agreement;
- 5.18.20 Approval of out-of-court settlements where court proceedings have been initiated in accordance with the delegated limits specified in the Partnership Agreement;
- 5.18.21 Approval of other out-of-court settlements not exceeding £10,000 per case, inclusive of claimant's costs which fall to be met by Libraries NI;
- 5.18.22 Approval of compensation payments made under legal obligation, e.g. by Court Order in accordance with the delegated limits specified in the Partnership Agreement;
- 5.18.23 Approval of Single Tender Actions above £1,000 and under the delegated limit for Libraries NI;
- 5.18.24 Approval of Business Cases for recurrent expenditure decisions where the annual recurrent expenditure is less than £300,000;

- 5.18.25 Approval of Business Cases for capital expenditure where the total expenditure is less than £300,000.
- 5.18.26 Approval of Business Cases for use of consultants for expenditure less than £10,000.

Risk Assurance Arrangements

- 5.18.27 Development of Libraries NI Corporate Governance policies and Risk Management Strategy for approval by the Board;
- 5.18.28 Maintenance of the Libraries NI Corporate Risk Register;
- 5.18.29 Preparation of a Bi-Annual Assurance Statement.

Staffing

- 5.18.30 Within the context of the overall agreed organisational structure, determination of the staffing numbers and grades required to discharge the business of Libraries NI;
- 5.18.31 The development and operation of policies and procedures relating to the recruitment, selection, appointment, deployment, training and development and remuneration of staff, ensuring compliance with statutory requirements;
- 5.18.32 The appointment of staff below third tier level;
- 5.18.33 The operation of the consultation and negotiation process with trades unions;
- 5.18.34 The establishment of targets for second tier officers, aligned to the annual Business Plan;
- 5.18.35 Appraisal of second tier officers in line with the agreed Scheme and making recommendations to the Remuneration Committee in relation to the performance rating assigned to each second tier officer.

6. Effectiveness of, and support to, the Board

- 6.1 The Chairperson of the Board and the Chief Executive will ensure that new Board Members receive a full formal and tailored induction on joining the Board. This induction will cover such issues as:
- the principles of corporate governance
 - the accountability process
 - the roles of the Board and individual Board Members, including expectations of corporate behaviour and the Code of Practice for Board Members
 - the functions, duties and responsibilities of Libraries NI

- 6.2 All new Board Members will be expected to attend recognised training on corporate governance.
- 6.3 On-going understanding of the work of Libraries NI will be promoted through regular presentations by relevant staff at Board and Committee meetings.
- 6.4 Board papers will be fit for purpose, relevant, and concise and include appropriate analysis to enable the Board to understand the background and issues to promote effective debate and, where appropriate, decision.
- 6.5 Secretariat support for the Board and its Committees is provided as follows:

		Contact person
Board	Chief Executive's Office	Mary McGrady mary.mcgrady@librariesni.org.uk Telephone: 028 9263 5322
Audit and Risk Assurance Committee	Chief Executive's Office	Mary McGrady mary.mcgrady@librariesni.org.uk Telephone: 028 9263 5322
Business Support Committee	Director of Business Support's Office	Gillian Clarke Gillian.Clarke@librariesni.org.uk Telephone: 028 38 399466
Services Committee	Director of Library Services' Office	Diane McGlynn diane.mcglynn@librariesni.org.uk Telephone: 028 8244 0727
Remuneration Committee	Human Resources Manager	Jacqui McKinstry Jacqueline.McKinstry@librariesni.org.uk Telephone: 028 3839 9462
Information Systems Committee	Head of ICU / ICT	Robert Meban Robert.meban@librariesni.org.uk Telephone 028 2566 4149

- 6.6 In line with good practice on corporate governance the Board and its Committees will undertake a regular review of their effectiveness and the efficiency with which they discharge the functions assigned to them and, if considered appropriate, will develop an action plan to progress identified issues. Independent input to the effectiveness process will be sought at least every three years.