National Library of Scotland
Leabharlann Nàiseanta na h-Alba

Boardroom, George IV Bridge
Monday 25 September 2017, 13.30

Present: Kenneth Calman (Chair - KC), Neil McIntosh (NMc), Fiona Robertson (FR), Noreen Adams (NA), Ruth Crawford (RC), Helen Durndell (HD), Simon Learoyd (SL), Adrienne Scullion (AS), Amina Shah (ASh), and Carmel Teusner (CT).

In attendance: John Scally (National Librarian - JS), Anthony Gillespie (Associate Director of Business Support - AG), John Coll (Head of Access - for item 21 - JC), Stuart Lewis (Head of Digital - for items 16, 17 and 24 - SLew), Alex Miller (Head of External Relations and Governance - AM), Robin Smith (Head of Collections and Research - for items 18 and 19 - RS), Mike Galloway (Health and Safety Manager - for item 18 - MG), Linda MacMillan (Capital Projects Programme Manager - for items 23 and 24 - LMac), Janet Stewart (HR Manager - for item 20 - JSt), Mungo Bovey (Faculty of Advocates - MB), Carol Campbell (TUS representative - CC), and Helen Jackson (Board Support and Compliance Officer - minutes - HJ).

Minutes of meeting

The meeting opened with a presentation by Inger Davidson (ID) and Stewart Hardy (SH) about marketing the National Library of Scotland. The Chair thanked ID and SH for the presentation.

1   Chair's welcome:

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. He summarised the items discussed at the Chairs' meeting of 13 September 2017, attended by KC, NMc, FR and SL:

- Board appraisal (see item 22 below)

- Succession planning: to be addressed by Governance Committee

- Staff pay claim

- Broader financial aspects within the Library.

The Board supported continuing to hold regular Chairs' meetings.

2   Apologies for absence:

Apologies were received and noted from Dianne Haley (DH), Iain Marley (IM) and Melissa Terras (MT). All three had sent comments/ queries; HJ would email answers to the questions raised.

3   Declaration of interests:

The Chair requested any declarations be made at the appropriate point in the agenda.

Items for approval:

KC introduced the 'consent agenda' format. He asked Board members to raise questions about papers on the consent agenda with the Library prior to meetings, to make sure queries with straightforward answers would not need discussion at the meeting.

HJ noted any Board member could request any paper on the consent agenda be moved to the main agenda.

KC requested Board approval of each item on the consent agenda:

4   Minutes of meeting of 26 June 2017:

The Board approved the minutes.

5   Actions outstanding and matters arising from previous meetings

The Board noted no actions were outstanding.

6   Draft minutes, Staffing & Remuneration Committee, 19 July 2017:

The Board noted the minutes.

7   Pay award update:

The Board noted the pay award approved by S&R Committee.

8   Draft minutes, Governance Committee, 4 September 2017:

The Board noted the minutes.

9   Review of governance documents and code of conduct:

The Board noted the documents and code of conduct approved by Governance Committee.

MB raised and the Board discussed the use of 'Chief Executive' in the governance documents. JS noted this term was used in the National Library of Scotland Act 2012 to describe the Chief Executive and National Librarian.

10   NLS Foundation update:

The Board approved Simon Learoyd's appointment as a Trustee of the Foundation. HJ to give the Foundation written notice.

11   National Librarian & Chief Executive's report:

KC introduced the report and highlighted the acquisition of Robert Burns' letter to William Niven. JS noted:

- This report would, for the first time, be published on the Library's website

- It included a strategic quarterly update

- The successful grant application 'The Rise of Literacy in Europe,' in which the Library is a partner, demonstrated our continued value as a collaborator in European projects

- A Brexit Monitoring Group had been set up

- Library staff members Gill Hamilton and Fred Saunderson had published a book on open access.

12   Audit Committee report:

SL gave a verbal summary of the Audit Committee meeting held on 14 August 2017:

- The 2016/17 annual report and accounts had been discussed

- Representatives from the new external auditors, Audit Scotland (ASc), had been complimentary about the Library

- The Treasury Management contract was up for tender. Audit Committee would report back to the Board when the tender was complete

- Audit Committee had reviewed fire safety and asbestos. It had received the necessary assurance that safety had not been compromised for budgetary reasons. The paper (AC/17/37) had been emailed to the Board on 18 August 2017

- Good progress had been made by the Digital Department (see item 16 below). The Committee would continue to monitor progress.

13   Annual report and accounts 2016/17:

AG spoke to, and the Board discussed, paper BM/17/40:

- AG noted the external audit was complete and Audit Scotland (ASc) had given an unqualified audit opinion

- AG stated the Library had accepted ASc's five recommendations. Steps were in place to implement them

- KC highlighted ASc's point 7 about the challenges the Library will face to continue to balance its budget

- RC asked about medium- to long-term financial planning. AG stated the Library drew up 3- to 5-year plans, which were reviewed by Audit Committee

- CT pointed out a typo in the Reserves figures in para 29 of the report produced by ASc. AG would feed this back to ASc

- RC noted ASc's recommendation about IT Business Continuity Planning and asked if recruitment issues increased this risk. JS confirmed a second round of recruitment for an IT Infrastructure Manager was under way, using a specialist agency. The job description would not be diluted. AG noted an interim post-holder was in place.

The Board approved the signing of the Letter of Representation by the Chair, and approved the signing of the 2016/17 Annual Report and Financial Statements by the Chair and the Accountable Officer (National Librarian).

14   Library Plan – Q1 update:

JS introduced paper BM/17/42. AM updated the Board on Development:

- It had been eight months since the Head of Development had left. The Library was recruiting a Development Manager and hoped to have someone in post in the new year

- Consultants the More Partnership were providing strategic and practical support

- MB asked why the vacancy had not been filled earlier. AM and JS confirmed there had been internal debate about the nature of the post. The More Partnership had assisted in shaping a job description

- The Development targets would be revised down at the midyear review. The range could be wide: from £50-100K to £500K if two funding bids were successful. CT noted her approval of ranges and said a wide range was not a problem

- The Kelvin Hall launch of the Patrons and Benefactors scheme resulted in 14 new sign-ups and some existing Patrons increasing their support to Benefactor level.

15   Quarterly finance reports Q1:

AG presented paper BM/17/42:

- Audit Committee reviewed the report at its August meeting

- The figures were similar to Q1 in the previous year

- The Library was on target to meet efficiency savings

- The Development target had been missed. This would not affect any activities in the budget. It might delay some additional projects.

[Stuart Lewis (SLew) joined the meeting.]

16   Digital update: Business Continuity Planning and cyber security:

SLew introduced paper BM/17/43 and answered questions:

- A suite of IT Business Continuity Planning (BCP) documents were now in place and a test schedule was being developed

- Existing cyber security arrangements provided protection, and various improvements were proposed. This would be audited by the Cyber Essentials Plus scheme

- SL asked whether it was necessary to recruit an IT Infrastructure Manager or whether an external consultant could provide the necessary skills. SLew confirmed the job needed someone on site, taking a team leadership role

- NA and RC asked about progress and timescales:

  o Individual BCP documents would be tested in coming months. A larger annual test of the BCP framework would be put in place after this

  o There was no programme yet for Cyber Essentials Plus. An accreditation company would need to be procured

  o Cyber security work was ongoing and the next penetration test was being planned, in partnership with the British Library

- MB asked if the Library could learn lessons when other organisations, e.g. the NHS, were hacked. SLew noted the Library was part of the Scottish Government's knowledge sharing forum, which had links to the National Cyber Security Centre.

17   Business case for additional IT storage

SLew presented, and the Board discussed, paper BM/17/44:

- Additional storage was required for the digitisation programme and to refresh older units

- Previously, expenditure on storage hadn't been approved by the Board. Smaller units had been bought when required and expenditure had been below the £250k threshold

- The proposed investment would provide a platform that could grow. There would be longer-term cost savings because there would be fewer systems to manage

- ASh asked about the ongoing financial commitment. SLew confirmed the framework would allow the Library to buy more storage in future years, without committing it to doing so. However, he noted more storage was always needed

- The procurement plan was being finalised and it was hoped a framework could be used. SLew confirmed no formal procurement had started

- RC asked if a government framework was in place. SLew confirmed there was a Crown Commercial framework

- RC asked if the Library was listed as a Contracting Authority on frameworks. AG confirmed it was

- FR noted, and the Board agreed, that a thorough options appraisal should have been provided for good governance. SLew outlined the other options:

    o Continue with current system. Overall spending would be similar, but would occur in smaller chunks

    o Move to cloud storage. Keeping three copies in the cloud is not yet practical: the Library's connection to the cloud is not big enough

- NA asked whether a single vendor, and single procurement, had been considered for both the disk and cloud storage. SLew confirmed the two were being kept separate to mitigate risks associated with supplier failure

- NA asked about political considerations if cloud storage was hosted outside Scotland. SLew confirmed the supplier was in England; there were no suitable suppliers in Scotland

- NA asked if the costings were high enough and whether there were additional costs beyond hardware. SLew confirmed initial market discussions suggested they were about right. Non-hardware costs would not increase: no extra staffing was needed, migrations were already done routinely, and the footprint for AV and power would go down not up

- NA noted the storage capacity was low if AV material was to be stored. SLew noted the system was scalable as needed

- CT asked for, and received, confirmation the cost was recurring. She requested it was recognised as such in requests for funding

- SL noted the year 1 costs would be funded from the Scottish Government's £300K capital grant

- RC asked for confirmation the current supplier would not charge termination fees. SLew confirmed it would not

- NA recommended the Board's approval of the expenditure should be dependent on exit terms being monitored by Audit Committee. HJ to add to Committee agenda.

The Board approved this expenditure, subject to NA's recommendation about exit terms (above).

KC noted a supplementary paper with additional information would be welcomed by the Board.

[Stuart Lewis (SLew) left the meeting.]

[Robin Smith (RS) and Mike Galloway (MG) joined the meeting.]

18   Health and Safety report

MG spoke to paper BM/17/45. In answer to questions he confirmed:

- The Scottish Fire and Rescue Service had raised no issues with the Library's handling of the nitrate film store situation

- The issues with the fire evacuation arrangements at KH were procedural. Glasgow Life had made the changes requested; the Library was awaiting written confirmation of this.

[Mike Galloway (MG) left the meeting.]

19 Major loan approval

The Board approved the loan of two Phoebe Anna Traquair illuminated manuscripts to the Keats-Shelly House in Rome.

[Robin Smith (RS) left the meeting.]

[Janet Stewart (JSt) joined the meeting.]

20 Draft HR plan

JSt introduced paper BM/17/47. NMc noted the draft HR Plan had been discussed by Staffing and Remuneration Committee, which felt the right approach had been taken. He noted three threads:

- Appraisal and career development. The current system was not functional and its review was a priority

- Staff survey. There were still some areas to address

- Skills development and succession planning.

The Board discussed the paper:

- JSt confirmed the Library paid the Scottish Living Wage and was working towards accreditation. Once achieved, the accreditation would be reviewed annually

- MB asked why the Library wanted a more balanced age demographic. JSt noted this was a diversity issue, and that the Library had an aging workforce which would lead, in 5-10 years, to a significant increase in staff turnover

- NA asked about the challenge of recruiting younger people. JSt noted some posts were recognised as first level posts and the Library had established relationships with organisations influential with young people and where financial incentives could be available. JSt added that a recruitment process aimed at recruiting younger people had proved successful in filling Access posts at KH. She noted NA's suggestion of mentoring/coaching

- NA asked if staff received unconscious bias training and if there was blind selection. JSt stated the Library was looking at equalities and diversity training which would incorporate unconscious bias. Discussions were under way with Age Scotland to deliver awareness training

- FR suggested adding a summary of external context to the report, to include e.g. issues about sourcing skills in the future and the end of the public sector pay cap. JSt to add

- NMc noted staff enjoyed working in the Library, which led to low turnover and lack of progression. Imaginative ways of ensuring continued motivation were needed

- SL asked what changes were being made to the appraisal system this year. JSt stated there were no changes this year, although managers were being encouraged to conduct appraisals. A new system would be developed for 2018/19.

[Janet Stewart (JSt) left the meeting.]

[John Coll (JC) joined the meeting.]

21   Business information at the National Library of Scotland

JC summarised paper BM/17/48 and answered questions:

- ASh asked if the recent Business & IP Centre collaboration between the British Library and city libraries in Aberdeen and Glasgow was a competitor to the Library's Business information service. JC said it was not: the emphasis was on partnership, not competition

- The Library's strength was that anyone in Scotland could access significant resources, while the BL's collections were only available on site

- ASh asked why Glasgow City Library had partnered with the BL instead of the Library. JC noted the BL had been active in building connections; JS highlighted its strong support via seminars and events

- MB asked whether free access to resources was a selling point. JC said other libraries' resources were also free

- MB asked if there was any plan to propose sponsorship links between businesses and the Library. JC said past experience showed leveraging income from business services was resource intensive

- CT asked about links to Chambers of Commerce and the CBI. JC stated the marketing plan included these types of organisations. He welcomed CT's offer of contacts.

[John Coll (JC) left the meeting]

22   Board appraisal

KC introduced paper BM/17/49 and noted his intention to carry out appraisals in March/April 2018. The Board held a detailed discussion.

- The Board agreed it needed to be appraised collectively, including a skills appraisal

- CT and AS noted JS's view should be included in the appraisal.

The Board approved the questions in the paper as the basis of Board appraisals. It asked Governance Committee, with assistance from CT, to take this forward and to extend this method to all Board members. HJ to add to Committee agenda.

[Linda MacMillan (LMac) joined the meeting]

23   Causewayside dashboard report

LMac spoke to paper BM/17/50 and provided a progress update:

- Work was ahead of programme and on budget

- The contractor aimed to leave site before 31 March. There would then be a period of making good

- Engagement work was underway, including an MSP site visit and staff tours

- Scaffolding was coming down and work was focusing on pavement level.

[Stuart Lewis (SLew) joined the meeting]

24   Closing presentation: George IV Bridge Re-imagined

LMac provided a very well received presentation on her concept proposals for the George IV Bridge building. The Chair and Board thanked LMac for the presentation.

25   Date of next meeting

Monday 27 November 2017 at Boardroom, George IV Bridge.

The meeting closed at 17.30.