

Nature of Meeting National Library of Scotland Board Meeting
Venue Video conference
Date of Meeting Wednesday 24 June 2020

Present: Kenneth Calman (Chair - KC), Helen Durndell (Vice Chair - HD), Simon Learoyd (Vice Chair – SL), Noreen Adams (NA), Elizabeth Carmichael (EC), Ruth Crawford QC (RC), Dianne Haley (DH), Alan Horn (AH), Iain Marley (IM), Lesley McPherson (LMcP), Adrienne Scullion (AS), Amina Shah (ASh), Melissa Terras (MT), Robert Wallen (RW)

In attendance: Mungo Bovey QC, Faculty of Advocates (MB), John Scally (National Librarian - JS), Anthony Gillespie (Director of Business Support - AG), Jackie Cromarty (Associate Director of External Relations - JCr), Susanne Munro (TUS Representative - SM) and Kathy Hutton (Board Support and Compliance Officer - KH).

Minutes of Meeting

1. Chair's Welcome

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and confirmed this would be his last Board meeting as was stepping down as Chair.

The Chair read a poem written for the occasion which recounted his experience in his role – a copy of the poem was passed to the Librarian for the collection.

The Chair advised Simon Learoyd would assume the role of interim Chair from 25 June.

SL thanked the Chair and confirmed he would assume the role for up to a year while the recruitment for a permanent Chair took place. The Board noted that Iain Marley would become Audit Committee Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

None.

3. Declarations of Interests

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

4. Horizon scanning

The Board noted the highlighted items.

ASh advised the Governance Committee proposed to commission a Board Effectiveness Review. The Board welcomed the proposal and delegated to the Governance Committee the authority to agree the scope and appoint an independent consultant to assist. The Board looked forward to receiving the recommendations early in 2021.

5. Minutes of the meeting of 25 March 2020

The Board approved the minutes (BM/20/18).

6 Actions outstanding and matters arising from previous meetings

The Board noted the action status.

7. Audit Committee minutes

The Board noted the minutes of 12 March 2020 (BM/20/20) and the draft minutes of 11 May 2020 (BM/20/21).

8 S&R Committee minutes

The Board noted the minutes of 4 March 2020 (BM/20/22) and the draft minutes of 20 May 2020 (BM/20/23).

9. NLS Foundation Minutes

The Board noted the minutes (BM/20/24).

10. National Librarian's Report

JS introduced paper BM/20/25 highlighting:

- The very productive work undertaken by staff working from home including boosting numbers in Hidden Collections and the Metadata from Home Initiative.
- A significant increase in domain use, including attracting at one time 54% of users from England in addition to users from countries such as US, Canada and Australia.
- The acquisition of several items to 'address the silences' including manuscripts and journals from a number of women travellers in the 19th and early 20th centuries and a rare book acquisition by James Valentine on anti-slavery.
- The 'Library on Lockdown Series', several pieces written by staff working from home on adapting to working from home while continuing to deliver a variety of online resources to

users.

- Significant Covid-19 web archive work capturing the story of the pandemic as it unfolded.
- The quick ramping up of 'Library events online', attracting 300 plus for some events.

The Chair thanked JS and Library staff for another interesting report highlighting the remarkable work of Library staff while working from home.

11 Strategy 2020-2025

JS highlighted that the strategy represents the second stage of the ten-year journey towards the Library's centenary, with the strategy now moving towards a greater focus on reaching people and increasing audiences. JCr confirmed that a structured programme of audience research is being implemented with both existing users and non-users of the Library's public offer.

The Board noted the changing landscape and challenges since March with the strategic focus of being more representative and inclusive of communities in Scotland and beyond remaining important goals.

Following discussion, the Board noted:

- The strategy introduction will be revised to reflect the changed environment since March and the context in relation to the Scottish Government Culture Strategy clarified.
- The timing to create an impactful launch date will be considered by the Library Leadership Team, who will also develop appropriate KPIs.

The Board approved the strategy and awaited advice on the proposed launch date.

12 Library resumption plan

JS confirmed the Library continues to refine the details of the resumption plan, taking account of Scottish Government (SG) guidance, in advance of a provisional opening date of 28 July. The overarching aim will be to ensure all staff and users of the Library are safe and to that end resumption will be cautious and staged. The Board noted the Library may require to make decisions within relatively short timescales as SG guidance changes.

JS advised that a variety of channels are being used to communicate with staff such as regular email updates, all staff video meetings and management forums. Line managers are actively engaging with staff to keep them informed and address

any concerns.

The Board noted the report including:

- The ongoing work by HR and line managers on individual risk assessments.
- Continuing review of emergency evacuation procedures.
- A pre booking system for users of the Library which would assist with the SG 'test and protect' guidance, in line with record retention compliance.
- Continued work on messaging for users as well as for staff, who will also receive a welcome pack on their return to work.

Mungo Bovey QC and Ruth Crawford QC left the meeting.

13. Library Plan Update 2019/20 – Q4

JS introduced paper BM/20/28 highlighting that 45 of 52 (87%) targets had been met with a further two largely complete. With the expected return to more normal working by the September Board, a clearer picture of progress will be provided. Some of the targets not achieved are dependent to some degree on external partners and staff not being in the Library buildings for the last three months.

The Board noted the increase in website visits in the last three months and a wider range of users, especially in maps. JS undertook to investigate providing more granular data on website users during this time.

Following Board discussion on a number of targets, the Board noted the report.

14. Strategic risk register

AG advised the strategic risk register was reviewed by the Audit Committee at its May meeting. The register has been significantly re-worked with the key factor of Covid-19 leaving no risk left untouched.

The Board noted that as a result of the lockdown the Library is presently outside its risk appetite for S2 – Loss or Interruption of Service. This is likely to remain as such until full services are resumed to the public at GIVB/CB and Kelvin Hall. The Library also continues to be outside current agreed risk appetite for S1 (Significant loss or damage to the Collections) as this is assessed as a low/medium risk compared to the agreed low risk.

The Board noted the report and that the Library would continue to review 'lessons learned' from the scaling down of services and build these into future plans for scaling services up and down as

the pandemic and SG guidance may require.

15. Quarter 4 Finance Report 2019/20

AG provided a brief overview of paper BM/20/30 highlighting a positive year-end result and that the Library will be adding to its reserves in line with the policy agreed by the Audit Committee.

At present Covid-19 is not yet having a major financial impact on the Library however, there is concern about future funding levels in light of Covid-19 and the impact on revenue streams such as dividend income from investments.

AG advised that, following a decrease at the start of the pandemic, the value of the Library's investments had now recovered to the level at the start of FY 2019/20.

The Board noted the Library is working to increase its digital literacy and engagement resources as well as offering additional remote working internships to support younger people, especially important in the post-Covid-19 environment.

The Board noted the report.

16. Health & Safety report

JCr provide an overview of paper BM/20/31.

- No incidents had been reported since the last report to the Board.
- The main focus of the Health & Safety Manager since the previous Board report has been on supporting staff working from home during lockdown as well as a significant role in resumption planning.

The Board noted the report.

Vote of Thanks for the Chair

On behalf of the Board, SL thanked the Chair for his leadership and guidance during his term in office, during which time the Library has made significant strides forward, including in its digital strategy.

On behalf of Library staff and the Leadership Team, JS thanked the Chair for his support and motivating influence during his time in office. JS recognised the considerable knowledge and experience the Chair had brought to the Library which had been extremely valuable as the Library implemented its strategy.

The Chair thanked the Board and asked for his thanks to be extended to the Library Leadership Team and all staff for their

hard work during his time in office.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 30 September 2020