

MINUTES OF BOARD OF NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND

Thursday 23 April 2020 at 11:00

Audio-video conferencing

	Present
Board	Paul Shovlin, Chairman; Dr Ciara Breathnach; Bob Collins (3.1-10); Prof Maeve Conrick; James Dorgan; Jack Keyes (2-10); Dr Conor Kostick (4.3-10) Katherine McSharry; Eoin McVey; Susan Philips; Prof Susan Schreibman; Jennifer Taaffe (1-8.1).
	In attendance
Staff	Dr Sandra Collins, Director; Orla Sweeney, Secretary; Colette O'Flaherty, Keeper of Special Collections (7); Ger Wilson, Head of Digital Collections (7)
Note: (1-10) denotes attendance for the inclusive sections of the minutes.	

1. Declarations of interests and procedural matters

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting was quorate. In response to the Chairman's enquiry, the Board had no interests to declare.

All papers were circulated in advance of the Board meeting unless otherwise stated.

The Board adopted the agenda.

2. Draft minutes of the Board meeting of 12 March 2020 and their publication

The Board agreed that section 9.3 and 9.4 of the draft minutes of 12 March 2020 should be amended to note that the relevant agreements were subject to amendments being agreed by the NLI Executive and DCHG in advance of signing.

The Board approved the draft minutes of the Board meeting of 12 March 2020 subject to two amendments and the publication of approved minutes with redaction as appropriate.

3. Matters arising

3.1 Action table

The Director noted the status of each action as detailed in the table. The following actions were considered in more detail as follows:

Action 19.5.5: On foot of the Director's request for the Board's views on the session relating to Special Collections, the Board noted it welcomed the opportunity to engage with staff; the format and content of the session was informative and interesting; and the session would make an exemplary webinar.

Action 20.2.5: The Director informed the Board that the appointments to the Board may be affected by the government interregnum and the additional obligations currently being undertaken by the Public Appointment Service.

The Board noted the matter's arising action table.

3.2 External review of the effectiveness of the Board: Board Improvement Plan

The Secretary informed the Board that its Improvement Plan had been updated following the Board meeting of 12 March 2020.

The Board noted the updated Board Improvement Plan.

4. Covid-19 Pandemic Report and Planning

4.1 Director's Report

The Chairman noted his appreciation to the Executive for the documentation provided to the Board in relation to its Covid-19 pandemic reporting and planning. In reply to the Director, the Board indicated their satisfaction with the documentation supplied and noted that it required no additional documentation from the Executive at this time.

In line with the business continuity information supplied under 4.2 below, the Director briefed the Board on developments in human resources; governance; internal and external communications; online public services and resources; and Reimagining the NLI: Building Programme. In addition, the Director advised the Board of the recent meeting between the

Council of National Cultural Institutions (CNCI) and the Minister of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and her senior officials.

The Board noted the Director's Report.

4.2 Revised Executive Action Plans 2020

The Director presented the revised Executive Action Plans 2020 which included Covid-19 NLI business continuity, re-entry planning and a revised outlook for each department for Q2-Q4 2020. Upon the Chairman's invitation, the Director focused her briefing on three items: recruitment; collection acquisitions concerning Covid-19; and Reimagining the NLI: Building Programme.

The Director answered queries from the Board concerning business continuity; re-entry planning; online engagement and resources; resumption of onsite readers' services; digitisation; temporary redeployment scheme; recruitment; and finance.

The Board noted the revised Executive Action Plans 2020.

4.3 Risk Management

4.3.1 Risk assessment for operations during the pandemic in advance of NLI closure

4.3.2 Pandemic Plan

4.3.3 Security arrangements

4.3.4 Risk assessment for staff re-entering the buildings during/post Covid-19 pandemic (phase 1)

4.3.5 Business operation continuity plan (phase 1)

The Director answered queries from the Board concerning security arrangements.

The Board approved the draft risk assessment for operations during the pandemic in advance of NLI closure; the draft Pandemic Plan subject to two amendments: (i) inclusion of references and (ii) marking of the document as 'confidential: contains personal data'; the draft security arrangements; and the draft risk assessment for staff re-entering the buildings during/post Covid-19 pandemic (phase 1); business operation continuity plan (phase 1).

5. Development Office Report

Katherine McSharry in her role as Deputy Director and Head of Development provided a presentation at the meeting on the activities of her office. In response to a query from Ms McSharry, the Board noted that the weekly communications on the NLI's public engagement were beneficial.

The Board noted the Development Office report.

6. Corporate Affairs (agenda item 7)

6.1 Finance

The Director briefed the Board on the external audit of the financial statements 2019; management accounts 2020 and finance unit remote working. The Director addressed queries from the Board concerning the statutory obligations of the external audit and remote working by the finance unit.

The Board noted the finance briefing and requested the Director to submit financial data (including cash flow) to the Audit and Risk Committee until the management accounts are prepared.

6.2 Human Resources

The matter was addressed above under 4.1 and 4.2.

7. Strategic Review: Collection Development Policy 2020 (agenda item 6)

The Secretary apologised for her delay in admitting Colette O'Flaherty, Keeper of Special Collections and Ger Wilson, Head of Digital Collections to the meeting and for inadvertently disallowing Sandra McDermott, acting Head of Published Collections.

The Chairman noted that a presentation was not required as the Board had reviewed the draft Collection Development Policy 2020 and provided its comments prior to the Board meeting. Ms O'Flaherty responded to queries from the Board on the summary of works timeline, scope of consultation, and the importance of the NLI's independence in collecting activities. The Board welcomed the draft Policy.

Ms O'Flaherty advised the Board of amendments to the summary programme of works as follows:

- The authors' response to the Board's comments on the draft Policy will be submitted for the Board meeting of 21 May 2020.
- Consultation with staff will now take place via email.
- A further draft of the Policy, following Board and staff consultation, together with guidelines will be submitted for comment for the Board meeting of 18 June 2020.

As per the summary programme of works, Ms O'Flaherty acknowledged that a further draft of the Policy following external peer consultation is on course to be submitted for approval for the Board meeting of 10 September 2020.

The Board provided approval for the Executive to proceed with its work on a revised Collection Development Policy (NLI Collection Development Policy 2020) which includes a policy focusing on the principles governing the development of the NLI's collections; consulting externally with peers on the draft policy; and supplementing the policy with more detailed documents/guidelines for each of the three collection areas: Digital, Published and Special.

8. Board Committee' Reports

8.1 Readers' Advisory Committee

8.1.1 NLI-LGMA Libraries Development Collaboration

The Chairperson of the Readers' Advisory Committee provided an update, in line with the paper, on collaboration between the NLI and the LGMA Libraries Development. In addition, the Committee Chairperson informed the Board that the parties had discussed piloting one of the NLI's travelling exhibitions across the public library network: however, given the Covid-19 public health measures the matter will be reviewed later along with the proposed joint meeting of the Readers' Advisory Committee and the LGMA Libraries Development Committee.

The Chairman commended the Committee's efforts.

The Board noted the briefing on collaboration between and the LGMA Libraries Development.

8.2 Audit and Risk Committee

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee informed the Board that the Committee will meet in advance of the Board meeting of 18 June 2020.

The Board noted the briefing on the Audit and Risk Committee.

8.3 Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry

In the absence of the Chairperson of the Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry, the Director who is an ex-officio member of the Committee informed the Board that a meeting of the Committee was scheduled to take place on 28 April 2020; however, due to the closure of the NLI due to the Covid-19 public health measures a briefing document will be submitted to the Committee in lieu of the meeting.

The Board noted the briefing on the Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry.

9. AOB

There was no other business.

10. Next meeting

The Board agreed to maintain its meeting schedule; the Executive Report, due to be submitted to the Board for its next meeting, could be brief; and Executive presentations to the Board are postponed until the Board resumes face-to-face meetings. The Board noted its next meeting will place on Thursday 21 May 2020 at 11.00am.

The Chairman closed the meeting.