

MINUTES OF BOARD OF NATIONAL LIBRARY OF IRELAND

Thursday 27 May 2020 at 11:00

Video conferencing

Board	<p>Present: Paul Shovlin, Chairman; Dr Ciara Breathnach; Prof Maeve Conrick; James Dorgan; Jack Keyes; Dr Conor Kostick; Katherine McSharry; Eoin McVey; Susan Philips; Prof Susan Schreibman (6-11); Jennifer Taaffe (3.2-11).</p> <p>Apologies: Bob Collins</p>
Staff	<p>In attendance: Dr Sandra Collins, Director; Orla Sweeney, Secretary.</p>
<p>Note: (1-10) denotes attendance for the inclusive sections of the minutes.</p>	

1. Declarations of interests and procedural matters

The Chairman confirmed that the meeting was quorate and noted the apologies of Bob Collins. 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 23 April 2020 and their publication

The Board approved the draft minutes of the Board meeting of 23 April 2020 without amendment and the publication of approved minutes without redaction.

Note: The Secretary subsequently amended the said minutes by deleting a reference to in person attendance by staff as all Board and staff members attended the meeting by video- conferencing.

3. Matters arising

3.1 Action table

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

Action 20.1.2: In response to an enquiry from the Board, the Director confirmed that the NLI had the ability to meet its pension liabilities this year from its payroll allocation. The Director advised the Board that she will request the new Head of Finance to continue to address with DCHG the matter of the insufficient pension allocation, as provided in the annual grant, in meeting the NLI's pension liability.

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 23 April 2020.

The Board noted the updated Board Improvement Plan.

4. Director's Report

4.1 Update on COVID-19 Planning

The Director provided the Board with a verbal briefing as follows:

- The Executive is preparing a plan including a communications plan on the re-opening of the NLI's buildings and onsite services, in line with Government and public health advice, for an opening date of 20 July 2020. The plan will be submitted to the Board for its approval at its next meeting.

- Planning and preparation for the onsite re-opening outlined with specific reference to human resources including trade union consultation; internal and external communications; corporate governance; and risk management.
- Overview of the services and associated protocols the Executive plans for the onsite re-opening.
- Provision of onsite services in line with public health advice is resource intensive particularly in relation to staffing.
- The high performance of online services and digital engagement which the Executive hopes to maintain.
- Collecting of the Irish record of the pandemic continuing.

The Director addressed queries from the Board concerning the onsite re-opening in terms of physical distancing; human resources particularly the management of staff in the COVID-19 at risk categories or with caring responsibilities; and information flows from the Executive to the Board's Committees.

There was a series of questions from the Board to the Director on the Executive's proposed communications plan; interim communications around the 8 June 2020 when public libraries re-open; and the information to be communicated relating to (i) onsite readers services and associated protocols planned for the re-opening (ii) the onsite readers services planned to resume at a later phase and (iii) online resources only available to readers onsite on the NLI's network and (iv) onsite reference materials which are valuable resources for independent scholars. The Director addressed each of the queries in turn noting that communications were ongoing and it continues to be an important consideration for the Executive as it plans for the NLI's re-opening of its buildings and onsite services.

The Board noted the Director's verbal briefing; the slide presentations to staff of 8 and 22 May 2020 and the *Return to Work Safely Protocol: COVID-19 Specific National Protocol for Employers and Workers*.

4.2 Executive Report

The Director focused on the following matters from the Executive Report:

- Increased digital engagement which was necessitated by the closure of the NLI's onsite services but is also in line with Board's focus on increased regional outreach.
- COVID-19 related digital and special collections.
- Executive planning for the re-opening of the NLI's buildings and onsite services, while also progressing ongoing projects.
- Progress in relation to the Reimagining the NLI: Building Programme and recruitment.

The Board approved the Executive Report.

5. Development Office Report

Katherine McSharry in her role as Deputy Director and Head of Development provided the Board with a verbal briefing relating to:

- The Other Voices 'Courage' project, bringing uplifting, inspiring performances to the public from different venues during the COVID-19 crisis, came to the NLI on 21 May 2020 with a concert by Glen Hansard in the main reading room.
- A documentary entitled 'Making a Museum: the story of MoLI' will air on 16 June 2020.
- 'Around the Island', a county by county social media and local press campaign highlighting photographs from the NLI's collections for every county is underway.
- Statistics detailing increases in digital engagement.
- The Development Office is focused presently on engagement, communications, website development and the Development Office Strategy. The Executive's priority is the re-opening of the NLI's buildings and onsite services. As Ms McSharry is leading on the Executive's plan to the Board on this important matter for its next meeting then the Development Office Strategy will be presented to the Board at a later date.

The Chairman on behalf of the Board commended the Executive's efforts in increasing the NLI's profile during these difficult times.

The Board reiterated their questions addressed by the Director on the Executive's proposed communications plan for the re-opening of the NLI's onsite services as it relates specifically to readers. The Director and the Board discussed the matter further.

The Board noted the Development Office Report.

6. Collection Development Policy 2020

The Board discussed sound archives noting that such archives are held by numerous institutions in Ireland including the NLI; however, unlike other countries, there was no national sound archive. The Board and the Director discussed a number approaches that could be undertaken to address the matter but noted that all require additional resources. The Board did not request that the draft Collection Development Policy be amended in light of the discussion.

The Board commended the Collection Development Policy 2020 process and encouraged the Executive, where possible, to follow the summary programme of works as outlined as part of the Policy.

The Board noted the authors' response to the Board's comments on the draft Collection Development Policy 2020.

7. Oversight Agreement, Performance Delivery Agreement and Reimagining the NLI Service Level Agreement

The Board noted the Oversight Agreement 2020; Performance Delivery Agreement 2020; and the Reimagining the NLI Service Level Agreement Phases 2 & 3.

8. Corporate Affairs

8.1 Finance

8.1.1 Finance Update

The Director informed the Board that the new Head of Finance is due to commence their post on 2 June 2020. The Director outlined the Head of Finance's work plan noting that their initial priority will be on the presentation of management accounts to the Board.

The Board noted the finance update.

8.1.2 Projected financial impact of COVID-19

In line with the paper, the Director advised the Board of the total projected financial cost of COVID-19 on the institution and cautioned that the data is subject to change.

The Board noted the draft financial impact of COVID-19.

8.2 Human Resources: Recruitment Progress Report

In line with the paper, the Director informed the Board of progress to date in relation to recruitment. In response to a query from the Board, the Director detailed the four posts for which sanction had been received from DCHG recently and the total staff complement in the institution.

The Board noted the Recruitment Progress Report.

8.3 Risk management

8.3.1 COVID-19 Risk Assessment and COVID-19 Business Operation Continuity Plan

The Board approved a further draft of the Risk Assessment and Business Continuity Plan for staff re-entering the buildings during/post COVID-19 pandemic (phase 1).

9. Board Committee' Reports

9.1 Readers' Advisory Committee

9.1.1 Readers' Advisory Committee Charter

The Chairperson of the Readers' Advisory Committee presented the draft Charter to the Board noting that while this was the Committee's first Charter, the Committee's responsibilities remained unchanged and the most significant modification was in relation to membership of the Committee in terms of associate members, gender balance, diversity and inclusion. The Committee Chair addressed a query from the Board concerning the Committee's membership as provided for in the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997.

The Board approved Readers' Advisory Committee Charter.

9.1.2 Readers' Advisory Committees approved minutes of 5 March 2020.

The Board noted the approved minutes of the Readers' Advisory Committee of 5 March 2020.

9.2 Audit and Risk Committee

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee informed the Board that once the next meeting of the Board was agreed, then the Committee would schedule its meeting to take place in advance of the Board meeting. The Committee Chair advised that the new Head of Finance would be invited to attend the next Committee meeting.

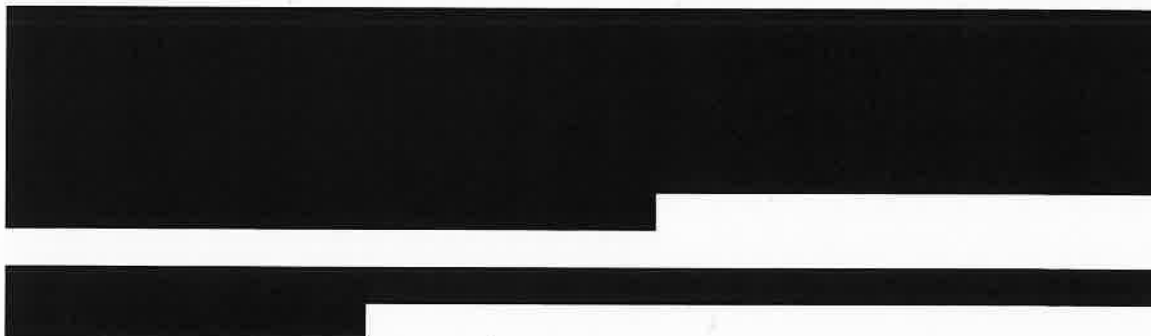
The Board noted the briefing on the Audit and Risk Committee.

9.3 Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry

The Chairperson of the Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry informed the Board that a briefing paper was circulated to the Committee in lieu of its meeting of 28 April 2020 which was welcomed by the Committee.

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

10. AOB



11. Next meeting

The Board agreed that its next meeting should be held on the rescheduled date of 25 June 2020.

The Chairman thanked the Board for their attendance via audio-video conferencing.

The Board agreed that the next meeting of the Board will take place on 25 June at 11am.

The Chairman closed the meeting.