

Minutes of the Board of the National Library of Ireland

Thursday 8 April 2021 at 11:00

Video Conferencing

Board	Present: Eoin McVey, Chairperson of the meeting Dr Marie Bourke Prof Maeve Conrick Dr Conor Kostick (1-10.1 only) Katherine McSharry Jennifer Taaffe
Staff	In attendance: Dr Sandra Collins, Director Orla Sweeney, Secretary Brian O'Donnell, Head of Estates (7.2 only) Colette O'Flaherty, Keeper of Special Collections (7.3 only) Ger Wilson, Head of Digital Collections (7.3-8.1 only) Sandra McDermott, acting Head of Published Collections (7.3-8.2 only) Kathleen Ruane, Head of Finance and CRO (8.1-10.2 only)
Note: (1-10.2) denotes attendance for the inclusive sections of the minutes. All other Board/staff members were present/in attendance for the full duration of the meeting.	

1. Designate a chairperson of the meeting and other procedural matters

Prof Conrick proposed Eoin McVey as Chairperson of the meeting. Dr Bourke seconded the proposal. The Board endorsed the designation of Eoin McVey as Chairperson of the meeting.

The Chairperson confirmed that the meeting was quorate. In response to the Chairperson's enquiry, the Board had no conflicts of interests to declare and adopted the meeting agenda.

The Board endorsed the designation of Eoin McVey as Chairperson of the meeting. The Board confirmed they were quorate; adopted the meeting agenda; and they had no conflicts of interests to declare.

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

2. Draft minutes of the Board meeting of 15 February 2021 and their publication

The Board approved the draft minutes of the Board meeting of 15 February 2021 without amendment and the publication of the approved minutes with redactions as appropriate.

3. Matters arising

The Director provided the Board with a brief overview of the matters arising action table.

The Board noted the matters arising action table.

4. Director's report

5. Executive report: progress against strategy

The Director, taking items 4 and 5 of the meeting agenda together, provided the Board with a verbal briefing as follows:

- COVID-19: The NLI's buildings and onsite services remain closed in line with the Government's guidelines. The Executive is preparing, in line with the Government's latest announcement, for the prospect that the NLI may re-open on or after 4 May 2021.

Staff access onsite is restricted for essential tasks. Recently, more staff have returned onsite with the necessary health and safety measures in place. Other staff continue to work remotely.

Over the last year, the NLI adapted to an unprecedented level of change by implementing remote working, an increase in online services and the provision of onsite services in line with Government restrictions.

In the case of exhibitions, learning and programming (ELP), the transition to online service delivery has been very successful with people attending talks, events and tours from around the world in higher numbers than could normally attend onsite. The Executive will consider how to balance the demand for onsite and online services, in line with limited staff resources, when the NLI's reopens.

- Capital development project/Re-imagining the NLI: While the project has been disrupted due to the COVID-19 restrictions on construction, Estates and OPW have been able to progress enabling and essential campus works such as modifications to 2/3 Kildare St and energy conservation works. The OPW has also progressed procurement documentation for the next phase of the capital development project.

The Director addressed a query from the Board concerning the public service appointment of the Chairperson and additional members of the Board.

The Board approved the Executive report. The Board agreed that the prompt appointment of a Chairperson and further members of the Board would be welcome particularly in light of the development and adoption of the NLI's Strategy 2022-2026.

6. Strategy

6.1 Strategy 2016-2021

6.1.1 Strategic priorities and goals 2021

The Board approved the draft strategic priorities and goals 2021.

6.1.2 Report on priorities and goals 2020

The Board noted the report on strategic priorities and goals 2020.

6.1.3 Director's goals 2021

The Board noted the Director's goals 2021.

6.2 Strategy 2022-2026

The Board approved the draft plan for the development of the new Strategy 2022-2026.

7. Presentations

7.1 Board induction: Audit, risk and finance

The Board noted the presentation on audit, risk and finance as part of its induction.

7.2 Capital development project

7.2.1 Presentation (agenda item 7.2.2)

The Director provided an overview of the capital development project.

The Head of Estates, Brian O'Donnell, in line with the presentation, outlined the project's goals; the phased development of the project; the project's impact on staff accommodation; budget and programming; the new proposal for the project's governance; and a summary of the matters outside the scope of the project.

The Head of Estates addressed queries from the Board concerning any unexpected matters of concern; subterranean rivers; the interconnectedness of buildings on the NLI's campus; and whether staff accommodation under the project would be centralised in one building.

The Board noted the presentation on the Capital Development Project.

7.2.2 New proposals for project governance (agenda item 7.2.1)

In line with the above presentation, the Head of Estates provided the Board with a high-level overview of the project's current governance system in

comparison to the proposed new 'Gov & Ops' system arising from the Project Ireland 2040 team and the revised Public Spending Code.

The Head of Estates addressed queries from the Board regarding the link between the project's phases and the provision of funding; and the adaptability of the project in light of emerging trends, for example, remote working.

The Director addressed queries from the Board regarding the closure of the exhibition space in the 2/3 Kildare St building; and governance systems for the other national cultural institutions' capital development projects.

The Board noted that further consideration is required in relation to the proposed new 'Gov & Ops' system.

The Board provided the Director with approval to inform the capital development project's Governance Committee that the Board's governance and financial procedures need to be considered in the proposed new 'Gov & Ops' system, and any impact it might have on decision-making and approval of expenditure instructions in the course of the building project.

The Board requested that the Audit and Risk Committee consider the proposed new 'Gov & Ops' system and advise the Board of its considerations.

The Board agreed that the appointment of the Chairperson and further members of the Board should take place before the Board's approval is sought in relation to the proposed new 'Gov & Ops' system.

7.3 Collection development policy

7.3.1 Presentation (agenda item 7.3.2)

7.3.2 Programme of work and revised timeline (agenda item 7.3.1)

The Keeper of Special Collections, Colette O’Flaherty, provided a verbal presentation to the Board in which she informed the Board that its feedback had been incorporated; outlined the external consultation list; and provided an overview of the timeline for the remaining programme of work.

The Keeper of Special Collections responded to queries from the Board concerning collecting contemporary non-mainstream cultural materials and consultation with a youth representative organisation on the draft policy.

The Board welcomed the alignment of the collections development policy with the new organisational strategy.

The Board noted the presentation and provided the Executive with approval to complete work on the collection development policy in line with the revised timeline as outlined in the paper.

The Chairperson of the meeting requested that the Executive update the Board, where relevant, on the progress of the work of the collection development policy against the approved timeline.

8. Business cases

8.1 Digital collections

8.1.1 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]



8.1.2 Digital camera operators

The Board provided approval for the Executive to hold a mini-tender competition under the Digitisation Services in the NLI Framework Agreement (2018-2022) for 2 digital camera operators for a 6 month period for digitisation projects.

8.1.3 Metadata creation and related services

The Board provided approval for the Executive to hold a mini tender competition under Lot 1: Metadata Creation, QA and Enhancement of the Collection Management Services Framework Agreement (2017-2021) for one experienced cataloguer for a 6 month period for the Yes Equality Digital Visual Archive Project.

8.1.4 ICT helpdesk service

The Board provided approval for the Executive to hold a tender competition, advertised on e-tenders website, for a one year contract for ICT helpdesk service with an option to extend the contract for a further year if satisfactory.

8.2 Published Collections: Approval to award contracts for the supply of books to the NLI Published Collections Department and to increase the funds allocated in line with previous years' allocation.

The Board provided approval for the Executive to proceed to contract with ProQuest LLC, a company with an office at The Quorum, Barnwell Road, Cambridge, UK, and O'Mahony's Booksellers Ltd, 120 O'Connell Street Limerick for the supply of new books published outside the Irish

Republic and second-hand books of Irish interest, for a period of one year initially with the option to extend this if satisfied.

The Board provided approval to the Executive to increase the funds allocated to the acquisition of new books published outside the Irish Republic and second-hand books of Irish interest by €32,000 to €80,000, to bring it into line with previous years' acquisitions spend.

Consequently, the Board provided approval for the NLI to proceed to contract for total funds of €80,000 (VAT zero rate).

8.3

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8.4 Finance: Provision of accountancy service

The Board provided approval for the Executive to proceed to extend the contract with Greavy and Co for the supply of a qualified accountant to the Finance department for a period of up to six months from the expiry of the current contract on 8 July 2021 [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8.5 Exhibitions, Learning and Programming

8.5.1 Band Aid Archive assessment

The Director addressed a query from the Board concerning projected costs of a Band Aid exhibition.

The Board provided approval for the Executive to tender under open procedure for services to conduct an assessment of the Band Aid Archive. The assessment will involve evaluating, identifying and documenting key artefacts from the archive, which will in turn facilitate cataloguing and digitisation of those artefacts for the forthcoming Band Aid exhibition and related public engagement activity.

8.5.2 NLI-DFA Seamus Heaney film collaboration

The Chairperson of the meeting noted that a film to accompany the travelling exhibition was a worthwhile initiative.

The Board provide approval for the Executive to tender for services to produce a film, in collaboration with the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), on the subject of Seamus Heaney under (i) open procedure for a film production company to create the film; and (ii) a request for tender for an independent executive producer to manage and provide oversight on the project.

9. Child safeguarding statement and child protection policy

In response to a query from the Board, the Director provided the background to the draft child safeguarding statement and child protection policy.

The Board approved the draft child safeguarding statement (document ref: 2) and the draft child protection policy (document ref: 1).

10. Corporate affairs

10.1 Finance

10.1.1 Effectiveness of internal controls 2020 and the statement of internal controls 2020

The Board noted that the Code of Practice for the Governance of State Bodies provides that the annual review of the effectiveness of internal control should be conducted by the Board close to the end of the period under review or as soon as possible after the end of the financial period under review, and no later than three months after the period end i.e. 31 March 2021.

The Board reviewed the effectiveness of the internal controls 2020 with reference to:

- The external audit and the management letter. The Board noted the management letter of the audit for year ended of 31 December 2019.**
- The internal audit reports. The Board noted the internal audit report on the review of capital projects and the internal audit report on the high level review of internal controls 2020.**
- Risk management.**
- Executive reporting to the Audit and Risk Committee and the Board.**
- The Audit and Risk Committee's reporting to the Board. The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee informed the Board that the Committee conducted a review of the effectiveness of internal controls 2020 at its meeting on 26 March 2021.**

The Board noted its satisfaction regarding the adequacy of the internal controls for 2020. Following the review of the effectiveness of internal controls 2020, the Board approved the

statement of internal controls 2020 as detailed in the draft unaudited financial statements 2020.

10.1.2 Management accounts for December 2020

The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee, at its meeting on 26 March 2021, reviewed the draft management accounts for December 2020 and recommended their approval by the Board.

The Board approved the draft management accounts for December 2020.

10.1.3 Financial statements for year ended 31 December 2020

The Board reviewed the draft unaudited financial statements year ended 31 December 2020 (draft 1).

10.1.4 High-level budget 2021

The Head of Finance, Kathleen Ruane, addressed a query from the Board concerning the projected end-of-year financial position.

The Director responded to a query from the Board concerning recruitment and the NLI's total staff complement in comparison to its European peers. The Director advised the Board that the Head of HR is scheduled to present at the next Board meeting.

The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee, at its meeting on 26 March 2021, reviewed the draft management accounts for December 2020 and recommended its approval by the Board.

The Board approved the draft high-level budget 2021.

10.2 Risk management: Risk appetite statement, risk management framework; and risk management policy

The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee, at its meeting on 26 March 2021 reviewed the draft risk appetite statement, the draft risk management framework and the draft risk management policy and recommended that the Board approve the said documents.

The Board approved the following three documents: the draft risk appetite statement (document ref: NLI-POL-20B); the draft risk management framework (document ref: NLI-POL-20); and the draft risk management policy (document ref: NLI-POL-20A).

Upon the request of the Chairperson of the meeting, the Secretary agreed to send hardcopies, on A3 paper, of the above documents to the Board.

11. Board Committees

11.1 Audit and Risk Committee: Report of 26 March 2021 and minutes of 28 October 2020

The Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee briefed the Board on the Committee meeting of 26 March 2021 and sought the Board's views on the formalisation of assurance statements from the Executive to the Committee.

The Board considered the matter and advised that the Committee could invite the Leadership Team (LT) to attend scheduled Committees meetings in order for the LT member/s to present on risks in line with the corporate risk register.

The Chairperson of meeting thanked the Committee for its work.

The Board noted both the Committee Chair's report on the Audit and Risk Committee meeting of 26 March 2021; and the approved minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting of 28 October 2020. The Board provided its view on the formalisation of assurance statements from the Executive to the Committee.

11.2 Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry and Readers Advisory Committee: Establishment

The Board agreed that the establishment of the Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry and Readers' Advisory Committee should be deferred until the Chairperson of the Board and further Board members are appointed.

On foot of a request from the Board, the Director agreed to advise the authors to include an alternative consultation option that could be pursued in lieu of consultation with the Readers' Advisory Committee on the draft collection development policy in the event that the said Committee may not be established prior to the policy's external consultation phase.

12. Board meeting schedule for 2021 including the date and time of the next Board meeting

The Board approved the draft Board meeting schedule 2021 including the date and time of the next Board meeting.

The Board noted that its next meeting will take place on 3 June 2021.

13. AOB

The Board had no other business.

The Chairperson of the meeting closed the meeting.