

REPORT OF BRANCH HEADS' MEETING
10:00AM, TUESDAY 16 MAY 2006
MEETING ROOM, TTH

Present: George MacKenzie, Peter Anderson, Dave Brownlee, David Brown, Jim Grady, Alison Horsburgh, Bruno Longmore, Rob Mildren, Laura Mitchell, Bob Phillips and Morag Fyfe (secretary)

Apologies: Ian Hill, Linda Ramsay

1. Minutes of Meeting of 9 March 2006 and Matters Arising

The previous minutes were approved.

(2 Corporate Plan and Targets) The final version of the Corporate Plan has now been published.

(3 Cultural Commission Review) A proposal has now been made to change our sponsorship to the Tourism, Culture and Sport Division of the SE Education department. This will not happen immediately, but some time over the coming year. We have established good relations with the Culture team, who are coming to speak to senior management on Monday 22nd May about the proposed Culture bill.

(6 CPD) Peter Anderson has now circulated his original minute, with corrections and amendments for comment. He will now be looking at the comments he has received with Arlene Chalmers.

(7.2 PLPs) Branch Heads were reminded that it is now only two weeks until end year reviews must be completed and submitted.

2. HR (*Mary Robson, NAS HR Business Partner*)

Mary Robson was unable to attend this meeting, sending her apologies. Her presentation will be given at the next meeting.

3. Reports

3.1 Accommodation

Bob Phillips reported on the latest developments:

ScotlandsPeople Centre – the latest pictures of the refurbishment work at GRH following the cessation of work in April were circulated. Some contracts are now being put in place to catch up on Health & Safety matters. Work will restart in some areas from 17 May, with work recommencing on the Dundas Room and Café by the end of June. The main contract for the residual works has now been advertised in the OJEU and there have been expressions of interest. This work should recommence around September/October.

Move of Legal Search Room – this has been postponed and will now take place in August.

TTH2 – indicative costs have been received from the design company. The business case will now be revised and put to the Minister in June.

TTH 2A shelving – a purchase order for the shelving was prepared last week.

WSR – the search room should re-open on Monday 22 May following the completion of the refurbishment work.

3.2 FOI

Bruno attended the FOI implementation group meeting in Stirling, reviewing FOI one year on. Most organisations are positive about the legislation. He also confirmed that Records Management Group from the Scottish Executive will no longer be proactively opening files. The opening of files will be done reactively when they are requested under FOI(S)A, when they will be sent back to the originating division for a decision. RMG will still be reviewing new files which are transferred to them for exemptions and there will still be files automatically falling open.

3.3 ICT

Rob Mildren reported on the latest developments:

Electronic ordering system – the new EOS, with links to the locations, readers ticket, transmissions and seat allocations systems, went live yesterday. The training for using the system went well. A few bugs have come to light, but these are being ironed out. It should be rolled out to all staff shortly, and then to the WSR.

Website Review – ICT intend to widen the responsibility for the websites. They will report quarterly to the Branch Heads meeting, with policy reviews going to Senior Management. To feed into the corporate planning cycle, a feedback week will be undertaken in October, in an effort to identify work for the coming year.

Sasine Digitisation – this is now underway by the GSU team at TTH, who have commenced with the 19th century Midlothian registers. The GSU are now working on both the Church records and Sasine registers.

Church Record Digitisation – Online resources will be presenting a small exhibition to the General Assembly next week, highlighting the work of the project and encouraging participants at the Assembly to think about their records. Work is being undertaken to ‘way-point’ the digitised volumes, marking the year changes to create chapter marks in the volumes of images. An access mechanism is currently under discussion.

3.4 Finance

Dave Brownlee noted that the budgets for this year will be sent out to branch heads by the end of this week. Both internal and external audit have recommended a closer monitoring regime for the budget, so we will now need to be able to provide evidence that branch heads have looked at monthly monitoring reports and actioned them.

4. Risk Registers

Following an audit requirement, Dave Brownlee requested each branch head to provide him with an updated branch risk register, which will be pulled into the departmental one.

5. Any Other Business

5.1 Staffing

The possibility of not having an archivist member of staff on duty in the West Search Room during lunch hours, while the service is one staff member short, was discussed. This would free up GRB staff who are often called on for relief work. It was agreed that some one would need to supervise the search room, although this could be the A3 member of staff, and that someone would need to be available to answer any difficult

questions. The Keeper asked Alison Horsburgh to think further on this in an attempt to reach a solution.

5.2 Fire Safety Officers and HSLOs

Branch Heads were asked to see if any members of their branch were interested in volunteering for these positions.

5.3 Supervision of contractors in store rooms

The questions of whether contractors need to be supervised at all times when working in store rooms was discussed. The consensus of opinion was that periodic checking of contractors would not be enough and that the security of the records would be at risk if this were to become the practice. This is something which will need to be discussed further and the view of the security committee taken into consideration.

6. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place in June and Morag Fyfe will canvas for dates.