



**Local Partnership Board Meeting  
2:00pm Tuesday 9 June 2009  
Lord Clerk Registers' Room, General Register House**

**Attendees:** George Mackenzie (Chair); Dave Brownlee (NAS); Jim Grady (NAS); James McCormack (Prospect); Maureen Morris (PCS); Scott Murray (Assistant Secretary PCS); John Nichols (PCS); John Mitchell (Health and Safety); Jenny Cutts (secretary).

**Apologies:** Jimmy Gilmour (PCS).

**1. Minutes of the last meeting**

1.1 The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

**2. Matters Arising**

2.1 There were no matters arising.

**3. Staffing and Finance Issues**

3.1 It was explained that branch bids exceed provision and the budget is still to be allocated. Vacancies will be scrutinised on a case by case basis.

3.2 The Band A review results are awaited. Dave Brownlee noted that 13 posts in NAS were submitted for the Band A review including A3 positions with supervisory duties. HR are expected to produce grading guidance that posts will be mapped onto. Maureen Morris observed staff concerns that people apply for cleaner A3 posts with the intention of moving into administrative posts at the same grade at some time in the future. Dave Brownlee explained that although NAS had received special dispensation to waive the qualifications requirement for cleaning posts, job-holders must hold qualifications for administrative posts. The merging of the A2 and A3 grades had made this trickier to administer.

3.3 Scott Murray explained that the Band C and Band B grading reviews will then be conducted simultaneously. It is anticipated that B and C Bands may be simplified in consequence. George MacKenzie noted that these reviews will affect Prospect members.

3.4 James McCormack enquired about the two strategic reviews referred to at the Open Forum on 2 June 2009. He reiterated views expressed that digital policy and procedures documents approved by senior management are necessitated. George MacKenzie agreed. He recognised that work towards developing a digital policy had reached a hiatus and that this should be pursued. He explained that both the review of public services and the review concerning electronic records have a digital policy dimension as well as informing other planning issues. He added that future developments are likely to be effected through small changes over time and the organisation will not be radically 'up-ended'.

3.5 James McCormack asked for the Keeper's strategic view on the overall goal of NAS. George MacKenzie replied that this is the sustainable increase in the use of the nation's records.

## **4. Progress on major projects**

### *4.1 ScotlandsPeople*

4.1.1 The ScotlandsPeople Executive Committee convened on the morning of the 9 June 2009. The Executive's review of progress indicated that it is generally going well. Two service interruptions have been encountered, one of which was in consequence of the water being turned off unexpectedly. A strong protest has been lodged with Scottish Water.

4.1.2 Other system performance difficulties have been identified and are under joint investigation by the GROS/NAS team as it is not yet clear whether the intermittent slow running of the IT systems is due to infrastructure or applications problems, or indeed both. A review of contingency arrangements is also planned. Some software improvements and server reconfigurations are already in hand. Maureen Morris noted that the NAS infrastructure support service level agreement stipulates one-hour response time. George Mackenzie explained that in practice, action is taken immediately. It was recognised that the ScotlandsPeople systems are very complex and teething problems were to be expected.

4.1.3 The seat occupancy target is 70% and customer figures are currently falling slightly below this. Dave Brownlee explained that until the systems performance issues are resolved, further marketing exercises to try and increase visitor numbers will not be undertaken.

4.1.4 The ScotlandsPeople/NAS shop performance was discussed. Sales of book stock generates the most income. Café Connections is attracting good custom over lunch periods but is underused at other times. It has been observed that NAS staff and visitors use the café, whereas GROS staff tend

not to. A discussion concerning prices and local competitors ensued and it was agreed that staff members are unlikely to pay for Café products on a daily basis as many bring packed lunches or buy cheaper coffee nearby. Scott Murray added that the canteen facilities at Victoria Quay are subsidised and it was noted that this provides food and drink for staff only, whereas the ScotlandsPeople Café is open to the public. For this reason, the Café offers staff discounts. It was explained that the original contract was for a period of 6 months with monthly extension thereafter. Jim Grady added that the Café's business is reviewed monthly with Heritage Portfolio and new ideas are considered. It is proposed that the ScotlandsPeople Centre screensavers feature an advertisement for the Café and this could be extended to computers within the Historical Search Room at General Register House.

4.1.5 George MacKenzie discussed the third phase of the ScotlandsPeople project which is the extension of this service to local authorities. This phase is under development and roll-out is expected to commence in 2010.

#### *4.2 Registers Archive Conversion*

The Registers Archive Conversion project continues apace. RegistersDirect2 is now expected to be launched at the end of 2009-2010, which is later than originally planned. It was noted that this delay will benefit NAS in terms of legal search income.

#### *4.3 Register of Tartans*

The Register of Tartans was reported to be operating successfully. The number of tartan registrations received is as expected and the administration of this is working very well. It was noted that the project office undertakes considerable liaison between tartan industry and tartan enthusiast stakeholders. Some changes to the systems are planned including the graphical improvement of registration certificates. To promote the Register of Tartans, a design competition is underway. Competition submissions are presently being judged by personnel from art and design colleges and a shortlist of ten will be selected. The ten runners up will receive money to make up their designs for public display and it is intended that a celebrity panel will choose the ultimate winner. The involvement of the Scotsman features editor was also noted.

#### *4.4 Famous Scots*

The third Famous Scots exhibition launch received excellent publicity due to the presence of its subject, actress and musician Shirley Manson. Visitor numbers are high.

#### *4.5 ScotlandsImages*

The ScotlandsImages sales have been analysed and NAS is generating income from this. It was noted that the availability of 15,000 to 20,000 images

represent the threshold for attracting profitable customer useage. Other partner organisations are being encouraged to add more images.

## **5. Health and Safety issues**

5.1 Dave Brownlee reported that the Health and Safety micro-site had been launched on the NAS intranet and was accompanied by a deskdrop. It was noted that the next meeting of the Health and Safety Committee will be held on 18 June 2009.

5.2 John Mitchell updated the group on the accident claim against NAS. Scottish Government lawyers have assessed the site of the accident and legal action is ongoing.

## **6. Any other competent business**

6.1 Maureen Morris explained a case she had dealt with where GROS staff members were unaware of the Staff Handbook rules because they did not have regular access to computer in fulfilment of their duties. The induction procedures for all NAS staff were clarified. Everyone is included in the induction process operated by the Development Centre and awareness of the Handbook and other induction reference material is part of that process. Jim Grady added that where staff do not work with computers, they are encouraged to undertake the European Computer Driving License in order to acquire these skills. Computers are made available for non-administrative staff to make use of, and this is not restricted to lunch and break times because checking work emails and intranet sources are work activities.

Action: Dave Brownlee to consult the Development Centre about provision of hard copy Welcome Packs, which give new staff details of all the main procedures operating in NAS as well as where to obtain further information. .

6.2 James McCormack asked about the framework for professional development. The Keeper welcomed views on this topic and suggested that a meeting be held. James McCormack agreed to email the Keeper on this matter and request that the meeting be scheduled. George MacKenzie suggested that Dave Brownlee be involved.

6.3 James McCormack also enquired about contingency plans regarding swine flu with particular regard for public service areas. George MacKenzie explained that Scottish Government guidance would be followed when issued. It was recognised that health experts anticipate that swine flu may worsen in the autumn in line with normal seasonal flu trends. The view was expressed that in the eventuality of a swine flu pandemic, the Scottish Government would be required to implement a national policy rather than a policy solely for employees. It was noted that the Scottish Government has requested volunteers for swine flu call centre training.

6.4 Long term accommodation policy was discussed. George MacKenzie explained that money will not be forthcoming to build a new storage facility on the TTH site (which is our preferred solution) in the next 3-5 years. For this reason West Register House will be retained for at least the next five years and certain maintenance work must go ahead. Preliminary investigations into the temporary use of the Station Road store by NAS are underway. It was noted that this storage building currently houses GROS closed census records and some Crown Office material and that further space is available. Some building improvements would be required to bring this space up to standard. It was added that the Granton scheme is not actively being promoted by Scottish Government. The Keeper explained that managing the quantity of accessioned records remains a priority and that Court and Legal Records Branch, which is responsible for the greatest volume of intake records, is currently addressing this.

6.5 Jim Grady noted that improvements to waste recycling are sought and NAS may be included within the Scottish Government's contract for this.

6.6 John Mitchell observed that moving computer equipment and furniture for commercial events hire requires lots of time and effort. It was agreed that investigating wireless connection options for the Adam Dome computers when they are due to be replaced would assist in this work by reducing the amount of cabling. Dave Brownlee noted that as Events hire is infrequent at the moment, the amount of preparation work will be monitored for future plans. George MacKenzie added that Event hire may generate lots of income and that all NAS costs including overtime are recharged. He also considers commercial events to be a good way of opening up the building to people and raising the NAS profile. Alternative choices of furniture for the LCR and Adam Dome were suggested. The Keeper added that thanks had been received in praise of the facilitators of the Criminal Justice Board event held at General Register House from participants.

6.7 George MacKenzie stated that NAS would remain open on St Andrew's Day 2009 on the same principle applied in 2008. Requests from staff members to take annual leave that day will be supported subject to business requirements as usual.

6.8 Dave Brownlee confirmed that the NAS/GROS summer barbecue will be held on Thursday 25 June 2009 and will be open to all staff. Although this year a charge would have to be made for tickets. Advertisements to this effect have been circulated throughout each organisation.

## **7. Date of next meeting**

The next meeting is due to take place in September 2009. Jenny Cutts will canvass for dates.

Jenny Cutts  
10 June 2009