

**MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING,
26 APRIL 2007,
ROBERTSON WING MEETING ROOM, GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE.**

Present: George MacKenzie, Peter Anderson, Dave Brownlee, Jim Grady, Mary Robson (HR), Sandra Stewart (Finance), Jenny Cutts (secretary).

1. Minutes of last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting held on 6 February 2007 were approved.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 It was noted that Ministers have agreed to fund the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) and that a business case is being drawn up by the SCA. NAS approve of the SCA and have offered accommodation at WRH.

Action: Jim Grady to cost provision of SCA infrastructure to inform Ministers.
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2.2 The purpose and format of the Keeper's Open Forums were explained and it was noted that reports of the discussions are posted on the Oracle.

2.3 It was reported that NAS had held a branding event on 18th April 2007, that participants had been very enthusiastic and that many ideas had been put forward. It was explained that plans to take this forward will include contracting for professional advice.

3. Staffing

3.1 Workforce plan

It was noted that Branch Heads will be asked to update their section of the NAS workforce plan following formal issue of budgets but that no major changes are anticipated. Mary Robson explained a new approach to workforce planning which has been implemented in the Development Department and which aligns the information presently supplied with financial information. An Excel document has been produced which will be piloted over two-three months and a blank template will be provided for NAS use.

Action: Mary Robson to provide workforce plan template.

3.2 Attendance management

It was noted that end-year figures demonstrate that sickness absence statistics for 2006-2007 compare favourably with those for 2005-2006. It was reported that status updates on cases for concern have been received from HR and are being issued to branch heads. Mary Robson described the importance of employee support in dealing with sickness absence and the role of the Employee Assistance Programme was noted.

3.3 Special Bonus Scheme

Fourteen special bonus awards have been made during the first year of the scheme's operation. A standard sum was awarded in all cases and each recipient had been notified in a personal letter from the Keeper. Thanks for recognition had been received from some recipients and further feedback from branch heads would be invited. Mary Robson described a similar peer-recognition scheme, but it was noted that as this had not been adopted by the Scottish Executive, it would not be possible for NAS to introduce it.

4. HR Update

4.1 Mary Robson reported that the resourcing policy review had incorporated wide consultation including senior civil servants and benchmarking with external organisations.

The main findings were:

- To move away from managed moves (though they would still be an option), as there were perceptions of unfairness and delay;
- Move away from having an “available staff” list of officers having to be considered initially for vacancies (and move towards offering the individuals more support);
- Introduce regular B1 and C1 assessment centres, to be managed by HR with line management involvement. Recognised that setting up Assessment Centres is burdensome for line managers;
- Employees passing such an Assessment Centre would be issued with a “half-ticket”, but would also be required to pass competency interviews for specific jobs;
- Keep post-specific assessment centres;
- No change to A Band recruitment just now, but it is accepted it is not working – this will be looked at again, following the election and the outcome of the spending review.

Action: Mary Robson and Dave Brownlee to meet regarding NAS resourcing review.

4.2 It was reported that one member of NAS staff had participated in the Essential Skills for Team Leaders training, that positive feedback had been received and that further opportunities for more individuals to participate were sought.

4.3 It was noted that amended performance management forms would be available for recording forward objectives but that current forms should be used for end year appraisals.

Action: Mary Robson to update Dave Brownlee regarding performance management system.

4.4 It was further reported that gaps in NAS payroll data have been updated by HR.

5. Finance

5.1 It was reported that the 2006-2007 outturn is very close to budget. Derek Glover will prepare draft Accounts with a view to having them ready for Audit by June 2007. It is anticipated that there will be no underspend although it was recognised that income from legal search services and from ScotlandsPeople was greater than expected.

5.2 It was further noted that the 2007-2008 budget would reflect the effects of the impairment charges incurred in 2006-2007. Finance have been alerted that we will need to bid at Autumn Budget Revision for capital and operating resources to meet known commitments for the building works in 2007-2008. Provisional Branch budgets would shortly be issued to branch heads.

5.3 Sandra Stewart reported that the UK spending review timetable has moved back and the Scottish Executive's sign off date will move to November as a consequence. Spending review for operating costs will be expected by June. NAS have already submitted capital bids for SR2007.

5.4 It was reported that negotiations with the Receivers of Peter Walker Group Ltd are continuing and no settlement will be made for inclusion in 2006-2007 accounts. It is expected that this action will be self-financing and NAS will neither receive nor pay further sums accordingly.

5.6 Engagement of VAT Liaison by ScotlandsPeople was clarified and it was noted that a further VAT workshop may be held regarding future retailing.

6. Corporate Plan 2006-2007 progress reports

Progress reports were circulated and highlights discussed. It was noted that branch heads would be reminded at the next Branch Heads Meeting to produce short factual quarterly reports rather than lengthy narratives in time for consideration at Management Board/Senior Management meetings.

7. Risk Register

It was agreed not to include the possible change of administration following Scottish Parliamentary elections as a risk in the NAS Risk Register as this would prompt 'second-guessing' of election results and consequences and would in any case soon be out of date. It was noted that the Risk Register would be reviewed following finalisation of the Corporate Plan but that no major changes were anticipated. It was reported that the risk of Industrial Action had already been included. It was agreed that the Risk Register should reflect lessons learnt from incurred impairment charges and should include the risk that depositors of private collections may claim against NAS for the loss or damage of all or part of a collection in the event of fire, theft, flood etc. The risk of further private collections being put up for sale is already included.

Action: Dave Brownlee to amend Risk Register.

8. ISPG report

8.1 Dave Brownlee provided a verbal report on the ISPG meeting held on 24th April 2007. It was noted that Scottish Family History Centre (SFHS) infrastructure would be in place by end June 2007 and that the joint telephony system (JTS) would be subsequently installed. It was reported that an archive storage room is required for server accommodation within GRH basement and that this would provide 3-5 years of expansion space. The inter-building links will be upgraded by Thus at nil cost and it is anticipated that WRH network performance will be improved as a consequence. It was also noted that: the Friday backshift within Digital Access Team was recognised as a worthwhile cost; that the Digital Data Archive would be ready to ingest e-sasine records by 1 August 2007; that upgrade to Calm version 7.2 had improved performance and that the development of an SQL server OPAC is included in corporate objectives for 2007-2008.

8.2 The Online Resources Team are working towards two procurements relating to digitisation and indexing of valuation rolls, in conjunction with GROS/NAS procurement teams, who are contracting for similar work. It was reported that the NDPB Learning and

Training Scotland (LTS) may be approached regarding project management support for NAS educational projects.

8.3 It was proposed that due to a current shortage of GSU volunteers (caused mainly by the strength of the pound against the dollar), the spare digital camera capacity might be used for work on the RAC project. A discussion regarding replacement of SCAN equipment was conducted as was a query concerning whether SCAN articles of association permit SCAN Ltd to fund any NAS digitisation work.

Action: Dave Brownlee to circulate minutes of ISPG meeting once finalised.

Action: George Mackenzie to discuss Scan Ltd with Rob Mildren.

9 Records policy

9.1 Collecting policy

Management Board approved the National Archives of Scotland policy on the acquisition and retransmission of private records. It was agreed to publish this document on the NAS website.

Action: Collecting policy to be published.

9.2 Liability and deposited collections

Management Board noted the position with regards to liability and deposited collections as follows. Whereas the collections GD18, GD157, GD158, GE249/2 and GD324 have been specially indemnified, no other private collections in NAS custody are covered by 'government indemnity'. These are covered by the Law of Deposit, which effectively means that providing we take all reasonable measures to look after the records in our care, we would not be liable for losses incurred.

10 Future governance arrangements

It was noted that the target date for appointment of non-executive directors (NEDS) is the January 2008 meeting and that the recruitment process will be initiated soon. Induction procedures for NEDS should be considered and it would be important that when NEDS were in place, all meeting papers should be circulated a week in advance.

11. Any other business

11.1 It was reported that the legal search room would be moving from the Adam Dome on Friday 27th April and that the Historical Search Room would close to the public at midday on that date in order to facilitate this. Arrangements for entry via the James Craig Walk fire exit and garden entrance were discussed. It was noted that a letter from ROS regarding suspension of access to GRH tea room had been received. The NAS view is that it would be unfair to grant ROS staff who work for the commercial arm of their organisation, privileges which are unavailable to other legal searchers.

11.2 It was noted that PCS union members would be taking industrial action on Tuesday 1 May. NAS buildings would open as usual though the services offered to customers would be restricted.

12 Date of next meeting

Dates will be canvassed for the next meeting, to be held at the end of July 2007.

