

**MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING,
3 FEBRUARY 2010 AT 10:00am,
ROBERTSON WING MEETING ROOM,
GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE**

Present: George MacKenzie, Dave Brownlee, Jim Grady, Frank Manson (Non Executive Director), Michael Moss (Non Executive Director), Jenny Cutts (secretary).

Apologies: Louise Wilson (SG HR).

1. Minutes of last meeting

1.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 October 2009 were agreed.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 [2.1] A meeting was held between the Non Executive Directors and office holders of the Scottish Council on Archives. The Keeper suggested that a further such meeting be held to follow up the discussion and that he would like to attend. The relationship between the Scottish Council on Archives and the Scottish Government Purpose and sectoral expectations was discussed. Michael Moss expressed the view that SCA strategic aims have not been made clear. The SCA's position would be affected if the proposed merger of the Society of Archivists, the National Council on Archives and the Association of Chief Archivists in Local Government went ahead.

2.2. [3.1] A meeting was held with Louise Wilson and contact has been made with SG colleagues regarding management information reports. George MacKenzie added that NAS has now joined the eHR system for recording annual leave.

2.3 [4.8] George MacKenzie noted that future funding for the Business Archives Council was included in the strategic planning document. He considered it prudent to continue funding in 2010-2011, and that sufficient warning of discontinued funding beyond this time would be given to BACS. Frank Manson noted that NAS should re-examine all relationships with external organisations to evaluate whether the Agency is getting value for money.

2.4 [6.2] Appointment of an additional Audit Committee member has not yet been actioned though the intention remains.

2.5 [6.4] Frank Manson explained that a formal report had not been presented to the Audit Committee concerning the 2008-9 audit as the issues were adequately covered during discussions held between the organisation and the auditors.

2.7 [9.1] George MacKenzie had written to heritage sector Chief Executives to suggest a NEDS/trustees forum with little response. The non executive directors felt it would be worthwhile establishing an informal group through personal contacts.

3. HR update

3.1 Louise Wilson was absent from the meeting due to work pressures.

3.2 It was noted that improved management information reporting will be pursued and that the Deputy Keeper (Corporate Services) continues to chase up attendance management cases which are causing most concern.

3.3 The Keeper outlined options in respect of improved HR function for the Agency. He felt that more in-house HR capacity may be beneficial, but this would involve additional staff costs at a difficult financial time. A strategic decision to secede from the SG main HR system was possible, but this would only be viable if the National Collections were offering some form of joined-up HR service. This would also involve extra cost and was not an attractive option.

3.4 The Shaping Up initiative has not yet reported on the Agency model and it has not been made clear whether a new model for government agencies will be promoted.

3.5 Dave Brownlee noted that one member of staff has been added to the redeployment register.

3.6 The NAS requirement for part-time consultancy advice on the proposed Public Records Bill is likely to be met via networking suggestions rather than via formal recruitment. The Keeper explained timetabling and Cabinet requirements in respect of Bills.

3.7 Dave Brownlee reported that Louise Wilson is likely to attend a meeting between NAS senior management and union members with regard to eHR annual leave system issues.

4. Strategic Review

4.1 George MacKenzie introduced the document on the strategic review and explained it required further refinement and development. The document concerns objectives for the period 2010-11 that are designed to effect changes and make preparation for more significant change in the light of reduced resources from 2011 onwards. The proposals in it will inform the NAS Corporate Plan 2010-11.

4.2 The strategic review document was considered in detail. Related discussions concerned records creators and records management, digital resources and records series, court records and procedures, Scottish Government paper records and eDRM system, advisory services to private owners, recordkeeping advice and scrutiny functions regarding public authority records, digital preservation, and staff training and development.

4.3 Frank Manson urged that the Keeper present to Ministers the realistic requirements needed to fulfil NAS functions and that plans outlining feasible responses to different levels of potential financial constraints should be considered in relation to this. He argued that presenting the desirable model alongside the contingency model would constitute best advice to Ministers.

4.4 The Keeper was in agreement over the formulation of a visionary longer term strategic framework and it was suggested that this should include graphical representations of the options and plans intended. He was less certain of the value of presenting Ministers with longer term scenarios, given the breadth of Ministerial portfolios and their focus on more immediate requirements. Senior management will involve Branch Heads in further strategic review discussion.

4.5 The Non Executive Directors suggested that consideration be given to succession planning in respect of senior managers at NAS.

4.6 It was agreed that a future meeting would concentrate on ICT strategy proposals . The acting Head of ICT Branch will be invited to attend a special session in advance of the next Management Board meeting. It was agreed this session may also focus upon the Risk Register and Key Performance Indicators.

5. NAS highlights summary, October - December 2009

5.1 The NAS highlights document was considered and no issues were raised.

6. Finance Report

6.1 The 2009/10 outturn to the end of Quarter 3 had been circulated earlier in January to Board members. There had been no significant change to projections since then. We are forecasting spend to come close to but under operating budget. A potential capital underspend of around £400k had been flagged up as part of the Spring Budget Revision exercise, but this was not clawed back by SG Finance. The sum of £200k had been transferred from GROS to the NAS Budget at SBR to help meet the running costs of the ScotlandsPeople Centre.

7 Audit Issues

7.1 A meeting with both the internal and external auditors was held on the morning of 3 February 2010. Michael Moss considered that the responses provided by Grant Thornton on their Audit Approach Memorandum were rather vague. Frank Manson expressed concern that the auditors should view Best Value delivery as the primary objective. He urged that the NAS Risk Register, Key Performance Indicators and Audit Plans be finalised as soon as feasible. Michael Moss added the view that NAS strategic review plans be stress-tested. He also queried whether budget reductions outlined in the long term plans would be realisable. George MacKenzie accepted the point that the scale of staffing reductions which may be required in 'worst case' scenarios could only be realised if current HR policies were to change.

8. Risk Register

8.1 It was agreed that a session be convened to consider the Risk Register in detail and that this document may be amended via email.

9. Any other business

9.1 Michael Moss enquired about papers concerning the public services study. George MacKenzie confirmed that findings of the study had informed the strategic review options, but further presentational refinement is required before circulating the public services report.

9.2 It was agreed to schedule a presentation on the DDA2 study for a future Management Board Meeting. Dave Brownlee reported that a productive meeting had been held with the National Library of Scotland concerning digital preservation.

9.3 George MacKenzie explained that lot of resources are focussed on public records legislation . He noted that the proposed Bill may adopt the Scottish Government list of public bodies rather than the larger list detailed in the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, 2005, schedule. The resource needs for advisory and scrutiny functions arising from legislation were noted. Frank Manson commented that local authority internal audit reports include information audit recommendations.

10. Date of next meeting

10.1 The next meeting will be held in three month's time in General Register House. Business Management will canvass for dates nearer the time.

Jenny Cutts
8 February 2010