

**MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING,  
10 AUGUST 2009 AT 10:00am,  
LORD CLERK REGISTER'S ROOM,  
GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE**

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

**Apologies:** Beatriz Sanchez (SG Finance).

**1. Minutes of last meeting**

1.1 George MacKenzie welcomed attendees and noted apologies from Beatriz Sanchez. The minutes of the last meeting held on 11 May 2009 were agreed.

**2. Matters Arising**

2.1 [11.2] Michael Moss reiterated the desire that NAS Non Executive Directors meet with the Scottish Council on Archives (SCA) and suggested that a meeting be arranged urgently. George MacKenzie supported this idea and the preference for attending a formal SCA meeting involving all members was agreed. It was confirmed that NAS has observer status with the SCA and the Head of Collections Development Branch attends meetings in this capacity.

Action: The Keeper will write to the SCA to request that Non Executive Directors are invited to a formal meeting of the Council.
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2.2 [4.3] Michael Moss drew attention to the TNA revised records management Code of Practice pursuant to s.61 of the Freedom of Information Act, 2000 which has now been issued and published by The National Archives. He agreed with the Code's emphasis on government information. The Keeper added that revision of equivalent Code pursuant to s.61 of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, 2002, is underway and Government Records Branch are involved.

**3. HR update**

3.1 Louise Wilson provided an update of HR activities. It was explained that the band A review steering group met on 29 July to prepare communications, which will issue shortly. The unions have been consulted about this and wording is being considered in detail. HR will issue advanced communication to Directors, Deputy Directors and Agency Chief Executives, as appropriate. An information notice and question and answers will be prepared for line managers. The review outcomes and guidance will be communicated to all staff via the Scottish Government intranet, Saltire.

3.2 HR have concluded that the band A review cannot be carried out in isolation from similar reviews of bands B and C, so these will commence shortly. There are also links to a Strategic Board directive concerning Scottish Government organisational structure.

3.3 The band A review found no evidence of A4 posts scoring at B1 level and evidence of grade drift.

3.4 Staff expectations were considered. Louise Wilson felt that A band staff members are expecting immediate tangible consequences of the review, whereas the review was carried forward as part of the current pay settlement and any changes in pay or grading would only become effective as part of the subsequent pay settlement from August 2011. NAS senior management confirmed that the Agency's band A staff have expressed such expectations and the Keeper considered that expectations management will be important. It was noted that the staff communication will explain this situation. George MacKenzie resolved to consider implications for NAS staff as soon as the information is received. No immediate solutions to the specific issues resulting from the A2-A3 grade merger within NAS are expected however. Michael Moss noted that redundancies have been made in Whitehall departments, so this should be borne in mind in communication with staff who may be disappointed with the review outcome.

3.5 Louise Wilson explained that the new look online vacancies board and 'Your Benefits' site have been introduced. The latter demonstrates benefits of Scottish Government employment in four areas: money, career, reward and recognition, and work, life and health. The online vacancy board system is currently used by Finance and Corporate Services but will be rolled out across the Scottish Government following acquisition and configuration of an online demonstration tool for use by line managers.

3.6 The outcome of absence management training sessions were reported. Approximately six sessions were arranged for Culture, External Affairs and Tourism Directorate (CEAT), and were attended by some NAS line managers. Content included policies and specific scenarios addressed through case studies and role play. Positive feedback was received and used to amend and improve the training. Dave Brownlee added that NAS staff members found the sessions useful. Louise Wilson explained that she had supplied the materials to the Development Centre and will assist with development of NAS/GROS specific sessions as required.

3.7 Louise Wilson has met with Nikki Brown, Deputy Director Creative Scotland Division, CEAT, to discuss the feedback received from the absence management training sessions. Nikki indicated that they would like to offer further training for line manager around resilience building. Further discussions are required around the actual details and options on how the training can be delivered. NAS will have the opportunity to be involved in due course.

3.8 The provision of management information by HR was discussed. There are plans for daily business intelligence reports accessible via line manager desktops. The unions are currently being consulted on the type and extent of sickness absence information that will be made available to line managers. George MacKenzie reported that the External Auditors were incredulous about the lack of management information provided through eHR.. It was also noted that the Management Information Team presently consists of just one individual (at B1 level). An administrative assistant will soon join the team, but recent interviews for a team manager failed to identify a suitable candidate and external recruitment is now underway. She confirmed that the Management Information team serves the entire Scottish Government. The Keeper explained that this area is important to NAS as much of our management information is currently derived from internal monitoring, which ties up resources.

3.9 HR has established a swine flu working group for contingency planning. Information, including questions and answers is available on the intranet and updated as changes arise. The key message at this time is 'business as usual'.

3.10 George MacKenzie addressed staff redeployment issues. NAS senior management recognise that if downsizing is necessary in future there may be problems in redeploying staff across the Scottish Government. The Scottish Government policy of no compulsory redundancies will expire in April 2011. The availability of accurate management information will be crucial. Louise Wilson asked that HR are involved as early as possible in order to assist with redeployment strategies. Frank Manson noted the government's continuing policy on redundancy and predicted serious problems for those Agencies where reduction in staff remained the only viable cost reduction strategy.

3.11 Jim Grady raised an issue concerning sickness absence procedures. NAS has experienced several instances where staff have returned from sick leave and duly completed the Return to Work process with line managers, but eHR escalates the approval authority as the sickness absence record remains open. It has not been possible to identify particular circumstances leading to this error despite investigation. Jim Grady explained that these errors have been raised with HR Shared Services but to date the problem remains unresolved. Louise Wilson requested specific details in order to pursue this with the head of HR Shared Services and Jim Grady agreed to provide these. He reiterated the labour intensive nature of NAS maintaining internal sickness absence monitoring.

Action: Jim Grady to provide information in order for Louise Wilson to pursue this matter with HR Shared Services.
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#### **4. Finance**

4.1 The quarterly monitoring report, April - June 2009, was discussed in detail. Frank Manson noted that there is no indication of reasons for under or over expenditure compared with year-to-date budget figures which means that trends may not be identified. It was observed that decline in legal search room income is a trend that is budgeted for, but the monitoring report format does not make this clear. Michael Moss agreed that there is a need for a commentary to be incorporated. After discussion, it was agreed that the quarterly monitoring report would include subsequent quarterly projections and commentary about variances.

4.2 Dave Brownlee explained that accommodation expenditure is dealt with on a priority basis. The organisation cannot afford to fund desirable accommodation spending and only essential maintenance work is being resourced.

4.3 Dave Brownlee reported that he has submitted the NAS response to a request from the budget portfolio (Office of the First Minister), asking for options for a possible 1.4% reduction in our 09-10 resource budget. Michael Moss enquired whether any contingency is included in the budget. It was clarified that there is none.

#### **5. Corporate Plan 2009-2010**

5.1 The latest draft of the Corporate Plan 2009-2010 was circulated for consideration. It was considered by all that this document should now be published, following minor amendments, as we are now several months into the current financial year.

5.2 It was recognised that the delay is due to the recasting of the Corporate Plan format in order to align NAS activities with the Scottish Government Purpose and National Outcomes framework. The revised Plan also reflects the Non Executive Directors' suggestion that this document should be a unified Agency plan rather than a sequence of separate branch plans. It was agreed that the current draft successfully realises both aims, though some minor improvements were suggested.

5.3 Frank Manson urged that further work on corporate planning, with regard to reflecting challenges and strategic business review planning, be focussed towards the Corporate Plan 2010-2011. This undertaking should be progressed throughout the remainder of 2009-2010 in order to finalise this before commencement of the subsequent year. The same approach should also be extended to the NAS audit cycle.

5.4 Frank Manson explained specific concerns regarding future risks. He considered that the NAS Corporate Plan should reflect future funding risks and a commentary about potential inability to deliver what the Agency plans due to funding constraints. Two audiences for the document were identified: staff members who require operational direction and stakeholders, some of whom may hold unrealistic expectations about NAS.

5.5 Dave Brownlee confirmed that the objectives included in the Plan fit current budget provision. It was accepted that the Corporate Plan can only reflect the financial situation at the time of production. Frank Manson suggested that a note to this effect be included in the text. It was agreed that it should be possible to be positive about the current situation and our business plans, while also being realistic about the potential risks to future funding.

Action: The NAS Corporate Plan 2009-2010 will be published as soon as possible.
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## **6. NAS highlights summary, April- June 2009**

6.1 George MacKenzie presented the NAS highlights summary for April - June 2009. Government Records Branch activities discussed included the review of public records legislation, reduction of government file closure from 30 to 15 years and revision of the section 61 Code of Practice on Records Management.

6.2 He explained that the review of public records legislation has largely been completed and proposals have been formulated for Ministerial consideration. A draft report is being considered by Scottish Government officials prior to submission to Ministers. The Keeper's advice to Ministers will be for a light piece of legislation that defines public records and provides a framework for further sector specific legislation or guidance to be established in consequence. It is acknowledged that this proposal would not be politically controversial.

6.3 Michael Moss enquired about the Keeper of the Records of Scotland's powers and responsibilities under this proposed legislation. The Keeper confirmed that his role would be advisory and it is not intended to add additional duties for the NAS. He explained however, that drafting this legislation would require significant input from NAS. If Cabinet approve

this legislation, dedicated resources within NAS would likely have to be diverted from other objectives to provide advice on the definition of public records and other aspects of the Bill.

6.4 Also discussed were plans for the release of government files in accordance with the announcement by Bruce Crawford, Minister for Parliamentary Business, that Scottish government files will be opened for public consultation after 15 years. Government Records Branch are advanced in planning the release of 13,000 files in three stages. A small exhibition providing background information will accompany the first release event, which is timed to coincide with International Right to Know Day on 28 September 2009.

6.5 It was reported that NAS has already provided advice directly to the Scottish Government regarding revision of the section 61 Code of Practice on Records Management pursuant to the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act, 2002 and does not intend to provide evidence to the public consultation for this reason.

6.6 Dave Brownlee reported that the Digital Data Archive (DDA) is now live and ready for accession or ingest of 'born digital' records, the first major series of which will be e-sasines. The DDA policy, procedures and technological capabilities comply with British Standard PD 0008 for the legal admissibility of electronic records. The second phase of the Digital Data Archive will concern access to the digital archives and the feasibility study relating to this is underway.

6.7 Dave Brownlee further explained that NAS is already custodian of some electronic records, such as tapes from the old 'SOCS' mainframe and Inquiry records on CD. The DDA makes provision for depositor agreements, metadata, format and accession protocol, and these elements are understandably not satisfied by those accessions which pre-date the DDA, so policy decisions will be required on how we deal with these.

6.8 Details about Court and Legal Records Branch work with the Lord President's Expert Group on Court Records and these were noted. The operation of the Tartan Register and provision of facsimile documents for the 400th anniversary of the Justices of the Peace exhibition at the Signet Library were also reported.

6.9 The Keeper drew attention to Collections Development Branch activities and observed that the merger of Private Records Branch and Outreach Services Branch had been effected with success. A visit from actor Brian Cox, the fourth person to be featured in the Famous Scots exhibition will take place on 11 August 2009. Details of the export agreement for the 8th Earl of Elgin archives to Canada were confirmed.

6.10 Results of the Public Services Quality Group (PSQG) had been provided by Reader Services Branch and highlights were discussed. It was noted that results were very positive for NAS customer services. The Keeper pointed out that onsite customers who responded to the survey represent a relatively small part of the NAS customer base. A number of NAS staff volunteered to participate in The Gathering event that took place as part of the Year of Homecoming, over the weekend of 25-26 July. The Keeper considered this event to be very successful with ScotlandsPeople stalls and auditorium talks both very busy.

6.11 It was reported that Accommodation Services Branch activities reflect the presumption that no capital budget will be made available for a second repository to be built on the Thomas Thomson House site for at least the next 5 years. Current estimates are that existing

storage capacity will be full in 7 years time, despite very tightly controlled accession levels. Investigation into the use of storage space at Station Road is ongoing and may alleviate the long term accommodation pressures. The Minister for Culture, External Affairs and the Constitution, has asked for further consideration of joint working with Historic Scotland and the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS), and joint storage arrangements may be an important element of this.

6.12 George MacKenzie noted that an IT Security Review will soon be undertaken, including penetration testing by an independent contractor. This will address some of the concerns expressed recently by the Audit Committee. A review of future ICT requirements will be informed by the ongoing business strategy reviews. It was reported that the Head of Information and Communications Technology Branch will be on long-term sick leave and this will inevitably have consequences for the IT review. New Illunis digital cameras and PC workstations have been deployed at TTH and initial indications are that they give around 20% increase in productivity.

6.13 Work towards the ScotlandsPlaces project was discussed. NAS and RCAHMS staff have been working together to deliver an online service to be launched at the Scotland's Global Impact conference in Inverness in October 2009. NAS will contribute 1,000 images of plans, tax schedules and Medical Officer of Health reports. Numerous possibilities for subsequently expanding this service have been identified and the project is considered to be politically advantageous.

6.14 The NAS Sustainability and Environmental Policy document was circulated. The Non Executive Directors and senior management approved this document and discussed some of the details. It was noted that NAS has a good record with regard to staff use of public transport. It was agreed that this policy be published following completion of certain figures.

Action: Sustainability and Environmental Policy document to be completed and published.
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## **7 Audit Issues**

7.1 The Keeper reported that senior management met with the External Auditors on 7 August 2009 to discuss the draft report. The meeting was very productive and enabled the Keeper and Dave Brownlee to explain the NAS approach to longstanding audit issues such as the Risk Register, ICT strategic review and performance measurement. It was clarified that the ongoing review into public services constitutes only part of a wider reaching strategic review. It was further explained that merger of the Private Records Branch and Outreach Services Branch had to take place in advance of the strategic review being to enable C1 resource to be freed up to undertake the public services study. Dave Brownlee will formally respond to the auditors interim draft report.

## **8. Risk Register**

8.1 Dave Brownlee reiterated that a radical revision of the NAS risk register may now proceed following finalisation of the Corporate Plan, 2009-2010. Frank Manson suggested that work towards the risk register commence as soon as possible in order that a draft risk register be made available for discussion at the next Audit Committee meeting.

8.2 Frank Manson added specific advice concerning the elimination of low-impact and low-likelihood risks and concentration on key risks such as financial stability, IT, accommodation planning and digital preservation. Michael Moss suggested that personnel succession planning also be addressed.

8.3 Frank Manson also counselled that external audit should be involved in risk register discussions perhaps in the role of session moderator, but that a full-scale risk workshop, led by an external auditor, would not be required. It was noted that development of the existing risk register was originally lead by the previous external auditors. This approach was accepted by senior management.

## **9. Strategic Review**

9.1 Senior management and Non Executive Directors resolved to discuss strategic review issues following the meeting.

## **10. Any other business**

10.1 There was no other competent business.

## **11. Date of next meeting**

11.1 It was provisionally agreed that the next meeting be held on 28 October 2009 in General Register House.

Jenny Cutts  
10 August 2009