

**MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING,
2 SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 10:00am,
ROBERTSON WING MEETING ROOM,
GENERAL REGISTER HOUSE**

Present: George MacKenzie, Peter Anderson, Dave Brownlee, Jim Grady, Frank Manson (Non Executive Director), Michael Moss (Non Executive Director), Maureen McGeown (SG Finance); Louise Wilson (SG HR), Jenny Cutts (secretary).

Apologies: none

1. Minutes of last meeting

1.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on 21 May 2008 were agreed.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 [4.1.1] The Monitoring Report was duly circulated following the subsequent meeting on 21 May 2008.

2.2 [5.1.2] The Digital Data Archive Stage 2 report has been commissioned. The remit is to investigate access to digital records, collaboration with other organisations and to give an idea of the scale of the tasks facing us. The target date for the report to be submitted to the Management Board is end-March 2009.

2.3 [10.1] The visit from Her Majesty the Queen on 4th July to mark the completion of the refurbishment work at GRH was very successful. It was explained that the ScotlandsPeople Centre opened to the public for free 2 hour taster sessions on 24 August 2008. The uptake has been encouraging despite minimal publicity. It was confirmed that the ScotlandsPeople Centre café will be operated by Heritage Portfolio on a one year trial basis and the aim will be to open the café at the same time as the Centre opens fully, hopefully by the end of November. Frank Manson noted the cafe may be successful as a destination in itself due to its location as it may prove popular with business people as well as ScotlandsPeople Centre customers. Michael Moss added that WiFi is desirable for visitors. George Mackenzie explained that thick walls present difficulties for wireless technology though accepted there are technological advancements.

3. HR update

3.1 The pay settlement was imposed by Scottish Government with effect 1st August 2009. There have been two days of industrial action by PCS union related to the pay dispute, 31st July and 20th August. NAS had maintained its services to customers on both days though customer numbers were lower than usual. Further industrial action has been threatened by PCS.

3.2 Implications of the A2-A3 merger within NAS were discussed. It was observed that the impact was greater for Agencies where A band staff are engaged in service delivery activities than within the core Scottish Government. HR will be undertaking a review of the A Band and NAS will be invited to participate in this. The results of the review are expected before

the end of this financial year. Dave Brownlee added that guidance from HR on duties which A Band staff may currently undertake will be very helpful.

3.3 The Scottish Government Employee Survey 2008 will take place between 11 November and 2 December. Nominated individuals are currently testing the electronic delivery of this survey to departments and Agencies, including non-SCOTS users. The survey will be amended to refer specifically to NAS in response to feedback.

3.4 Louise Wilson reported that resourcing announcements about Bands B and C promotion boards are expected soon.

3.5 The number of Band A vacancies approximately doubled during the recent recruitment campaign and it was not therefore possible to fill all posts. Strategic consideration is being given to the necessity of a further recruitment campaign. It was reported that NAS acquired two members of staff from the band A recruitment exercise.

3.6 It was explained that the policy on discipline is being scrutinised by the Scottish Government lawyers and that a focus group will be held.

3.7 Louise Wilson asked for feedback concerning e-HR. Jim Grady explained that he and another member of staff were available to offer guidance within NAS as 'super-users' and that there has been no resistance to the adoption of e-HR. George Mackenzie expressed concerns about the replacement of NAS in-house SL9 system of recording sickness absence with the e-HR module. It is no longer possible for senior management to monitor the timely completion of return to work interviews or to obtain statistical summaries. It was added that the levels of sickness absence within NAS remain the same as the previous year. Frank Manson noted that sickness absence levels are linked to staff morale within all parts of Scottish Government. It was agreed that Dave Brownlee and Louise Wilson discuss the provision of sickness absence statistics. The e-HR system will eventually be used to obtain statistics directly following resolution of system permissions issues. Frank Manson noted that the ability to demonstrate that proper procedures have been followed is important in the event of any disciplinary action. It was agreed to put e-HR and sickness absence on the agenda for the next branch heads meeting.

4. Finance

4.1 Monitoring Report

4.1.1 Jim Grady reported highlights from the monitoring report. Members were made aware of the projected shortfall in the 08-09 operating budget. NAS will bid to recover previously £500k of operating costs, mostly related to the ScotlandsPeople refurbishment work, which was surrendered at the Spring Budget Revision in 07-08.

4.1.2 Michael Moss noted the drop in income concerning legal business. He asserted that the establishment of robust key performance indicators will enable NAS to emphasise efficiency in service delivery.

4.1.3 Jim Grady reiterated the fact that NAS receives no pay uplift to cover pay settlement unlike other areas of the Scottish Government.

4.1.4 Frank Manson considered the appropriateness of account codes and expressed the view that the enforced use of unchanged codes hinders budget management.

4.1.5 Operating budget was discussed with regard to activities that NAS may stop doing. It was agreed that further consideration was required to differentiate between essential and desirable functions. The Scottish Government has requested options for further savings of 0.5%. The NAS submission outlined that the only way to achieve this saving would be by the closure of the West Search Room, though in practice savings would only be achieved if HR were able to arrange redeployment of staff. Louise Wilson emphasised that the Scottish Government has a policy that there are no compulsory redundancies, though NAS staff members may be redeployed to other areas within the Scottish Government. George Mackenzie said he would welcome the Non Executive Directors advice on the wider issues of the Department's financial position and where its priorities should lie over the remaining period of Spending Review 2007. It was agreed that it would be worthwhile holding an extraordinary Management Board meeting, probably in late November/December once the position on Public Sector Reform was clearer, to discuss the strategic issues facing NAS.

4.1.6 Performance indicators and efficiency savings were considered further. It was observed that efficiency savings are very difficult to demonstrate when an organisation is already operating efficiently. It was agreed that proposals be developed to facilitate discussion at the proposed meeting on strategic issues.

4.2 Accounts

4.2.1 The External Audit report on NAS accounts 2007-2008 is awaited. It is expected that operating cost expenditure will be very close to the allocated budget.

5. Corporate Plan 2008-2009 progress reports

5.1 Records Services Division (April-June)

5.1.1 Peter Anderson reported salient aspects of the records services division quarterly progress reports which were circulated in advance of the meeting. Court and Legal Records Branch continue to participate in the Lord Presidents Experts Groups on records management which has met for the second time.

5.1.2 The NAS Public Records Legislation Review Group and progress with the Digital Data Archive were discussed. It was noted that Government Records Branch have been unable to progress revision of NAs selection policy for Scottish Government paper and electronic records due to other work pressures on both GBR and SG Information Management Unit. Publicity and access status issues were discussed with regard to Peter Manuel records and associated GRB tasks. It was recognised that a number of Public Inquiries are underway and input from GRB is required.

5.1.2 The Outreach Services Branch video-conferencing programme was considered. Delays were experienced with regard to ICT and tendering issues. A discussion was held about the importance of outreach and education activities and core activities that NAS is obliged to continue.

5.1.3 Public Records Branch objectives and progress were discussed with particular regard to the Elgin papers. The Export Committee decision is expected by 10 September 2008. The Minister for Europe, External Affairs and Culture sent a letter in support of the export of this collection. George Mackenzie explained plans to collaboration with the National Archives of Canada with regard to access projects. Discussion about resourcing cataloguing and core activities was held. Michael Moss recognised that private records are not an essential activity. Peter Anderson explained that more rigorous appraisal of private records has been applied than previously.

5.2 Corporate Services Division (October-December)

5.2.1 Dave Brownlee noted Accommodation Services Branch progress against objectives. The ScotlandsPeople Centre was opened for trial sessions in August 2008. This represents the completion of building work that was commissioned in 2002. Negotiations with the Administrators of the failed Peter Walker Group will now resume. Participation in a schools competition to design energy saving posters was noted.

5.2.2 Reader Services Branch are revising fees and charges in collaboration with FAB. A decision was taken not to change customer charges during the period of disrupted public services, but now fees must be brought in line with Registers Direct and ScotlandsPeople charges. A working group to review DIMCAT has been established and a survey of on-site customers is planned.

5.2.3 The ICT branch progress report was circulated at the meeting. Progress with the valuation rolls digital imaging project was noted. Michael Moss suggested that ICT Strategy should be a topic for discussion at the forthcoming Management Board event and this was agreed. Development of the Register of Tartan and work to establish the ScotlandsPeople Centre were recognised. The Stage 2 Parliamentary debate on the Tartan Register Bill is scheduled for 10 September 2008.

6. Audit Issues

6.1 Issues arising

Audit issues were noted. Development of ICT and Financial Accounting strategies are considered essential. Issues regarding heritage asset valuation were discussed including the valuation of General Register House. Advice regarding implementation of the International Financial Reporting Standards is being sought from Derek Glover.

6.2 Approval of Data Protection documents

Data Protection policy documents were circulated and approved in principle. It was agreed to adopt and publish the policies following finalisation.

7. Electronic Records and Digital Policy

7.1 The Digital Data Archive (DDA) was discussed. The DDA2 scoping study will be monitored by the Digital Data Archive Project Board and will report to Management Board. The DDA2 officer will be asked to submit an interim report on emerging findings.

7.2 Frank Manson noted the necessity of NAS defining its role concerning digital data archiving before establishing collaborative partnerships with other sectoral bodies. George Mackenzie agreed and asserted that the scoping study will provide a clear idea of what is possible in this respect.

8. Risk Register

8.1 It was reported that the risk register was considered at the Audit Committee meeting on 31 July 2008. Michael Moss reiterated the suggestion that the risks be re-ordered within the register. Frank Manson emphasises the importance of using risk registers to manage identified risks.

9. Any other business

9.1 It was reported that NAS will be participating in the Doors Open Day on Saturday 27 September in collaboration with GROS and Court of the Lord Lyon.

9.2 Homecoming 2009 events were discussed. The ScotlandsPeople partners will produce a series of exhibitions on Famous Scots to run throughout the year, based in the New Register House Dome. NAS will also participate in The Gathering event scheduled for July in Holyrood Park.

10. Date of next meeting

The next meeting will be held in General Register House on 13 November 2008.

Jenny Cutts
22 October 2008