

**MINUTES OF MANAGEMENT BOARD MEETING,
6 FEBRUARY 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 10 November 2006 were approved.

2. Matters Arising

It was noted that the Special Bonus Scheme awards had been processed and paid to recipients. NAS is awaiting a decision from National Heritage Memorial Fund by 20th February regarding purchase of the Dalhousie Muniments. It was noted that the previous meeting's action points on Pertemps contracts and NAS volunteer policy have been completed.

3. Staffing

3.1 Workforce plan

It was noted that the next update to the NAS Workforce plan will be tied into the 2007/2008 budget exercise.

3.2 Archivist recruitment exercise

The B2 Archivist recruitment exercise has been completed with five applicants successfully appointed, two of whom started on 5th February, two starting later this month and the remaining candidate in April. Feedback concerning the length of time for the recruitment process to be undertaken by HR was provided. It was agreed that Mary Robson would meet with Jim Grady and Dave Brownlee to discuss the HR resourcing review paper and to consider the establishment of a Service Level Agreement between HR and NAS concerning recruitment.

<p>ACTION – Mary Robson to meet with Jim Grady and David Brownlee to discuss HR resourcing and recruitment services.</p>

3.3 Attendance management

The requirement for status updates concerning monitoring of individual employee's sickness levels was noted. It was agreed that Mary Robson and Stuart Mclean will meet with Dave Brownlee to plan a tracking system to supply NAS with monthly status reports from HR, including information on trigger point breaches and any action taken. It was noted that NAS requires support from professional advisors in cases where formal warnings have been issued and breached. Mary Robson stressed the importance of gathering evidence of local support mechanisms offered in the eventuality of dismissal hearings. It was also noted that NAS has sought comparative attendance management solutions from other organisations, but at this stage we are constrained by agreed SE procedures and could not apply different standards in NAS. The reasons for poor sickness absence were discussed including consideration of patterns in age and occupational areas.

ACTION – Mary Robson and Dave Brownlee to meet Stuart McLean regarding HR support for attendance management.

4. HR Update

Guidance would be sought from HR on the circumstances in which an officer can return to their previous post on return from maternity leave. It was explained that the Scottish Executive would try to accommodate this, where that is the wish of the employee, but recognise that there can be circumstances where changed structures and business needs render this impossible.

ACTION – Dave Brownlee to write to Mary Robson with details of a current case to seek further clarification.

Mary Robson provided an update on HR policy review which has particular emphasis upon resourcing and performance management. Proposed changes to the performance management system were discussed. Provided that agreement had been reached by SE-HR Policy by March, guidance on changes will be provided by the Development Centre for NAS staff before the start of the new reporting year. Thanks were expressed for NAS contribution to the data cleansing exercise. Two corporate development initiatives were discussed: ‘Leadership Programme’ (for Senior Civil Servants and C band staff) and ‘Essential Skills for Team Leaders’ (for staff with reporting responsibilities). It was agreed that clarification on agencies’ ability to participate would be sought from Diane Milne.

It was also noted that a complaint concerning term-time working would be passed to HR.

5. Finance

Timings for the development of TTH2 business plans and submissions to ministers were discussed with regards to spending review cycles. It was noted that a bid for TTH2 will not be ready until October 2007 and depends upon engaging consultants to appraise options. It was agreed that the TTH2 business case would need to profile expenditure carefully to take account of both capital and operating costs, and different spending review periods. We would respond to the recent request from Finance Division, which asked for details of spending pressures in SR07, by highlighting the anticipated TTH2 case and estimating a total project cost of £30million. Meantime we would write to Ministers by the end of February, asking them to note our strategy of developing a Business Case based on a new building on the TTH site, which would be submitted to them before the end of the year.

A discussion concerning the change in NAS governance structures and administration of NAS budget was held. Advantages and disadvantages of NAS remaining in the administration budget portfolio with GROS or moving to the Education portfolio were considered and it was noted that the status quo was preferable at least during the development of ScotlandsPeople.

ACTION – Jim Grady to provide financial report to inform mid-month review by 12th February. Dave Brownlee to respond to Finance request for details of SR07 pressures. Keeper to issue Ministerial submission by end-February.

6. Corporate Plan 2006-2007 progress reports

Progress reports were circulated and highlights discussed.

CLRB had raised the question of counting their liaison contacts and it was agreed that only those where advice on records was given should be counted as a performance measure.

It was noted that RSB depend upon ICT Digital Image Unit to meet objectives.

Publication of the NAS annual report was discussed, including the option of a quiet web publication of the overdue report for 2006-7, timetable for production of next year's annual report, requirement to lay before parliament, cost considerations such as limited print run and print on demand service. It was noted that an internal meeting concerning progress on RAC search tool is due to take place and it was agreed that NAS/ROS would host a meeting to demonstrate the search tool to heads of legal search firms in order to encourage uptake by legal searchers.

7. Risk Register

It was noted that Branch Heads have been asked to update their segments of the NAS Risk Register and that two further risks are to be added concerning industrial action and re-use of public sector information. It was reported that NAS has met with OPSI (Office of Public Sector Information) for guidance on the latter.

8. ISPG report

Dave Brownlee provided a verbal report on a recent ISPG meeting held on 26th January. agreed to circulate minutes to the Board when these were agreed. It was reported that key cables had been replaced in WRH and subsequently potential improvement in WRH network will be reviewed using measurements and user's perceptions. It was noted that costs for outsourcing web support services would be uncompetitive and in-house web support is recommended. Options for providing in-house out of hours internet support were considered including the extension of helpdesk hours, recruitment of further staff and formal on-call payment.

ACTION – Dave Brownlee to circulate minutes of ISPG meeting.

9. Any other business

9.1 Future governance arrangements

It was reported that NAS will recruit external board members and the Pensions Agency has been consulted for advice including guidance on advertising, recruitment and payment. It was agreed that Jim Grady will find out about standard Scottish Executive remuneration for non-executive directors.

ACTION – Jim Grady to investigate remuneration for non-executive directors.
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9.2 Away Days report

It was noted that the top 3 choices arising from the Away Days exercise looking into suggestions for improvements were Digital Policy, NAS Branding and restricted opening of search rooms to facilitate training/stocktaking. It was agreed that a mini away day event on digital policy would be organised.

9.3 Corporate Plan 2007-2008

It was noted that draft branch objectives have been requested and that bi-lateral meetings between senior management and branch heads to discuss the NAS Corporate Plan 2007-2008 will be held during the last week in February and first week in March.

9.4 Staff survey follow up

It was agreed that senior management will meet to discuss the staff survey results more fully and the need to publish a specific action plan in response was considered. It was also noted that the Keepers' Open Forums will continue on an ongoing basis and was agreed that a cycle of open forums covering each of the three buildings in turn be established.

ACTION- Jenny Cutts to set up open forums.
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9.5 Scottish Council on Archives accommodation

It was agreed to cost the provision of accommodation for the Scottish Council on Archives in order to quantify the value of NAS contribution of free office space and to draw this to the attention of the Minister. NAS will provide free space to the Council for at least the first year, and then review the situation.

ACTION - George Mackenzie to discuss with Ian Hill. Jim Grady to advise on costs.

10. Date of next meeting

Dates will be canvassed for the next meeting, in early May 2007.