

Public Minutes of The National Archives' Board		THE
		NATIONAL
Held on 27 July 2021 at 10:00 via Video Conference (VC)		ARCHIVES

Present:

Lesley Cowley (LC - Chair) Chair of The National Archives' Board
Sonia Cargan (SC) Non-executive Board Member
Rommel Pereira (RP) Non-executive Board Member
Ros Scott (RS) Non-executive Board Member
Emmajane Avery (EJA) Director of Public Engagement
Neil Curtis (NC) Chief Operating Officer
Lucy Fletcher (LF) Director for Public Records Access and Government Services
Jeff James (JJ) Chief Executive and Keeper (joined the meeting from item 3 onwards)
Valerie Johnson (VJ) Director of Research and Collections
Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) Commercial Director
John Sheridan (JS) Digital Director

Also present:

Darren Austin (DA) Head of Procurement (Item 4)
Asha Bagayat (AB) Head of Governance (Minutes)
Alex Forbes (AF) Head of Government Services (Item 9)
Mike Kostyn (MK) Interim Head of Finance (Item 6)
Mark Newman (MN) Head of Estates (Item 4)
Malcolm Todd (MT) Head of Policy (Item 7)
Andrew Payne (AP) Head of Education and Outreach (Item 10)
Sam Whaley (SW) Head of Strategy and CEO's Office

1.0	<u>Welcome / Introductions / Apologies / Declarations of Interest</u>
1.1	Apologies for absence were received from Mark Richards (MR). He had pre-submitted comments, which were shared by LC during the discussion of the relevant items. Apologies for lateness were received from JJ.
1.2	LC welcomed GMR to her first meeting as an executive member of the Board.
1.3	RS declared an interest in Item 7 as a former member of the Parliamentary Restoration and Renewal Committee. There were no further declarations of interest.
2.0	<u>Minutes / Matters Arising / Action Log</u>
2.1	Subject to minor amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 25 May 2021 were approved as a correct record.
2.2	There were no matters arising.

2.3	The Board reviewed and noted the actions log.
3.0	<p><u>Non-Executive Board Members' Updates</u></p> <p>3.1 Non-executive Board Members (NEBMs) each provided a verbal update on their recent activity, including insights from other organisations.</p> <p>3.2 LC reported on her involvement in the recruitment of the Director of People, Inclusion and Change and Corporate Services Director posts. Along with MR, she had attended a session with The National Archives Trust consultants on developing their fundraising strategy and along with RS, attended a briefing on the new Section 46 Code of Practice. Work was underway on developing a recruitment pack for a new chair, which will be shared with Board members for their comments.</p> <p>3.3 LC also provided an update on the joint HMT/Cabinet Office <i>Public Bodies Programme</i> aimed at improving relationships and governance between arm's length bodies and their sponsor departments and developing best practice.</p> <p>3.4 At this point, JJ joined the meeting.</p> <p>3.5 SC reported on her recent visit to Kew, attending The National Archives' Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Forum and feeding comments into the draft EDI plan and also her meeting with VJ and the Head of Archives Sector Development on our sector leadership role.</p> <p>3.6 RP noted his induction meeting with GMR and also outlined the agenda items and workstreams he had requested for the next Audit and Risk Committee meeting in September.</p>
4.0	<p><u>Executive Team Update</u></p> <p>4.1 The Board received an update on Executive Team activities.</p> <p><u>Executive Team Update Report</u></p> <p>4.2 NC provided an update on the Spending Review 2021, including timescales.</p> <p>4.3 EJA provided an update on our reopening/expanded offer to readers and visitor services at Kew.</p> <p>4.4 Staff communications were being drafted relating to non-standard hybrid working requests. The Board received assurance that each request will be treated on an individual basis and handled sensitively.</p> <p>4.5 LF provided a verbal update on the two ongoing legal cases against the Government on the use of auto-deletion messaging services by departments and use of private email accounts at the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC). The National Archives would continue to keep a watching brief on the cases and were ready to support the Cabinet Office in the drafting of any guidance around these issues. The Board would be kept updated.</p>

- 4.6 The Board:
- (i) Noted the update;
 - (ii) Requested to be kept updated on the two legal cases.

1921 Online Census – RAG Update

- 4.7 The Board was invited to note the update on the 1921 Census programme and discuss RAG ratings, progress and risks identified.
- 4.8 Apart from income projections, all RAG ratings were noted as green.
- 4.9 In response to a question by RS on how engaged FMP were with the genealogy market abroad, particularly the US, Canada and Australia, GMR agreed to make inquiries and provide a narrative for the October meeting.
- 4.10 The Board:
- (i) Welcomed and noted the project update and the latest RAG rating position; and
 - (ii) Requested an update on FindMyPast’s market reach abroad at the 22 October Board meeting.

Charging for Online Events

- 4.11 The Board received a paper on a decision made by the Executive Team on 13 July 2021 to introduce a new charging model, ‘Pay What You Feel’, for The National Archives’ online talks programme (What’s Online), reviewing its impact on audience and income every three months.
- 4.12 The Board:
- (i) Endorsed the Executive Team’s decision to implement a ‘Pay What You Feel’ (PWYF) charging structure for the online talks programme on a 12 month trial basis;
 - (ii) Felt the proposal reflected the approach taken by other heritage organisations, particularly those in Canada; and
 - (iii) Suggested the description of the model should consider affordability.

- 4.13 **POST MEETING NOTE:** The model will be described as ‘Pay What You Can’ (PWYC).

Total Facilities Management Contract

- 4.14 The Board received a paper on a decision by the Executive Team taken in February to extend the current Total Facilities Management (TFM) contract with Bouygues Energy and Services for two years. The contract is essential to the running of the building at Kew, providing building operation and maintenance, cleaning, post and porter services, receptionists, reprographics and building security.

<p>4.15</p> <p>4.16</p> <p>4.17</p>	<p>There was a discussion on liabilities and assurances were received that there were no TUPE implications relating to the contract extension.</p> <p>The time delay between the decision being taken by the Executive Team and the report being presented to Board for oversight and scrutiny was commented upon.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Endorsed the Executive Team’s decision to extend the current TFM contract and the next steps set out in the report; and (ii) Agreed to be kept updated on the contract via the Executive Team update report. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Action by: NC/MN/DA</i></p>
<p>5.0</p> <p>5.1</p> <p>5.2</p> <p>5.3</p> <p>5.4</p> <p>5.5</p> <p>5.6</p>	<p><u>Corporate Reports</u></p> <p><u>May and June Financials</u></p> <p>The Board received the May and June financial reports.</p> <p>NC reported that the 3+9 Financial Forecast was being prepared, which would provide further clarity on the year end outturn and that the new Operational Management Team, a sub-committee of the Executive Team would be meeting the following week to agree interventions to monitor and manage the forecast.</p> <p>MK provided assurance that the finance team were working closely with budget holders for confidence in spending to manage the forecast outturn.</p> <p>The Board noted the May and June financial reports.</p> <p><u>Quarter 1 Strategic Business Priorities</u></p> <p>The Board received the strategic intents business priorities for Quarter 1 and noted the items currently ‘not on track’ and the explanations behind them.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Noted the report; and (ii) Noted that the performance metrics were being revised for the Quarter 2 reporting.
<p>6.0</p> <p>6.1</p> <p>6.2</p>	<p><u>The National Archives Online</u></p> <p>The Board was presented with a paper providing an update and an opportunity to reflect on some of the progress The National Archives’ has made to ‘connect with the biggest and most diverse audience possible, in the most innovative ways we can’ as set out in <i>Archives for Everyone</i>.</p> <p>The Board received two short presentations, the first from EJA on our experience ‘pivoting’ to an</p>

	<p>online model for public engagement – a necessarily rapid response to the COVID-19 pandemic, but one that was also in line with The National Archives’ longer-term strategic aspirations. The presentation covered reach, audience, access, commercial and income and inclusion. The second presentation, from the Head of Digital Services, focussed on Project Etna, and the work to re-imagine what an archive might be on the web, including enriching our data and catalogue content.</p> <p>6.3 Generally, the Board found the initiatives exciting, particularly for users that have previously struggled to access materials and records using Discovery.</p> <p>6.4 VJ highlighted the work of Archives Sector Development in connecting with the sector through online training and initiatives and noted the importance of having a unified online presence.</p> <p>6.5 There was a discussion on how progress could be accelerated and the constraints to this. EJA noted that the next step was to look at synergies and linkages across the organisation to develop a unified brand and language for online audiences and identify where commercial opportunities might exist. The work of the Private Beta will inform much of this but resourcing was a key constraint.</p> <p>6.6 The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Welcomed the presentation and felt excited by the work and direction of travel; (ii) Noted progress and expressed ambitions to go faster, whilst recognising the constraints; (iii) Agreed that exploring potential partnerships to reach new audiences, either through curating topics or bringing collections together, was the appropriate direction of travel; and (iv) Asked that strategic considerations related to our online presence be picked up either at the September strategy meeting or a future strategic session. <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Action by: SW/EJA</i></p>
<p>7.0</p> <p>7.1</p> <p>7.2</p> <p>7.3</p>	<p><u>Parliamentary Archives</u></p> <p>The Board received a paper providing an update on ongoing discussions with the Parliamentary Archives Relocation Programme, as an offshoot of the wider Restoration and Renewal programme, on a proposed partnership with The National Archives.</p> <p>There was a discussion on risks to The National Archives and ensuring these are reflected in the Corporate Risk Register.</p> <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Noted progress of discussions on the proposed partnership; (ii) Discussed and endorsed the strategic alignment of the proposed partnership with <i>Archives for Everyone</i> and the longer-term development of The National Archives; (iii) Noted the risks and asked that these be reflected in the Corporate Risk Register, as appropriate;

	<p>(iv) Noted that the timing of key stages was likely to remain fluid and may not always be aligned with the Board's forward schedule; and</p> <p>(v) Agreed to establish a Board sub-group for project governance and oversight. MT to make approaches out-of-committee for members.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Action by: MT</i></p>
8.0	<u>Court Judgments and Tribunal Decisions</u>
8.1	The Board received a paper providing an update on work and plans for The National Archives to receive, preserve and publish court judgments and tribunal decisions. Including plans for the delivery of a replication of the BAILII service by the end of the year with a longer term ambition to publish more content.
8.2	JS introduced the paper and reported on the recent visit by three senior members of the judiciary who left Kew feeling positive and assured on our context and capability to deliver the service. JJ expressed his thanks to JS for leading the visit.
8.3	JS noted there is no single repository of court judgments and tribunal decisions pre-dating 2003. There is a variety of potential sources, in addition to BAILII (law reporters, court transcription companies, legal publishers and HMCTS).
8.4	<p>The Board:</p> <p>(i) Noted the work and plans to deliver the project;</p> <p>(ii) Received assurance around the project governance and noted the project risk register;</p> <p>(iii) Agreed that all project assumptions should be captured in a single document by JS;</p> <p>(iv) Looked forward to receiving an update at its November meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Action by: JS/AB</i></p>
9.0	<u>Transfer of Ministry of Defence (MoD) Service Personnel Records</u>
9.1	The Board received a paper providing an update on the transfer of MoD military service personnel records to The National Archives and the key project work-streams.
9.2	AF shared pictures of the records transferred to illustrate their condition and the need to re-box them for preservation and preparation for cataloguing and digitising. He also spoke about work to design the public access regime and invited the NEBMs to engage with this work-stream.
9.3	<p>The Board:</p> <p>(i) Noted progress on the project, key work-streams and plans for future deliveries from MoD;</p> <p>(ii) Welcomed engagement from MR, RP and RS on more detailed conversations about access arrangements; and</p>

	<p>(iii) Suggested including Service Personnel Records as part of the discussion relating to storage/location at the September Strategy meeting.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>Action by: LF/AF/SW</i></p>
10.0	<u>Education and Outreach Strategy</u>
10.1	The Board was invited to discuss and approve an Education and Outreach Strategy 2021-25 for The National Archives, aimed at engaging students, teachers, families, young people and communities with our collection.
10.2	There was a discussion on engagement with a wide range of demographics, strategic insights on audience size and projections and commercial opportunities. AP noted that traditionally our reach beyond the Southeast of England was low and that the strategy set out our aim to use online programmes to expand geographical reach and demographics.
10.3	EJA clarified that the adult learners team was separate to the schools team and there were plans to develop a separate strategy on education and events for adult learners.
10.4	<p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Welcomed and approved the ambitious strategy, which aligned with our ambitions to become the Inclusive Archive as set out in Archives for Everyone; (ii) Praised the structure, which had clear connections to digital, geographical and outreach; (iii) Felt that the scope of the strategy could have been clearer to distinguish services and plans for adult learners; (iv) Supported the exploration of commercial opportunities without creating barriers to access; and (v) Noted that the strategy and its associated priorities aligned with the ambitions of The National Archives Trust.
11.0	<u>Any Other Business</u>
	<u>Forward Work Programme</u>
11.1	The Board reviewed the Forward Work Programme for Board meetings.
	There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 14.54