

Minutes of The National Archives' Board		THE	
		NATIONAL	
Held on 19 July 2022 at 10:00 via Video Conference (VC)		ARCHIVES	

Present:

Andrew Wathey (AW - Chair) Chair of The National Archives' Board
Sonia Cargan (SC) Non-executive Board Member
Rommel Pereira (RP) Non-executive Board Member
Mark Richards (MR) Non-executive Board Member
Ros Scott (RS) Non-executive Board Member
Emmajane Avery (EJA) Director of Public Engagement
Neil Curtis (NC) Chief Operating Officer
Jeff James (JJ) Chief Executive and Keeper
Valerie Johnson (VJ) Director of Research and Collections
Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) Commercial Director
Andrea Metcalf (AM) Director of People, Inclusion and Change
John Sheridan (JS) Digital Director

Also present:

Asha Bagayat (AB) Head of Governance (Minutes)
Beth Brunton (BB) Head of Development, Public Engagement (for item 2)
Jack Butterworth (JB) Head of Grants & Funding (for item 7)
Sam Whaley (SW) Head of Strategy and CEO's Office

1.0 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Lucy Fletcher, Director for Public Records Access and Government Services and Aaron Smith, Corporate Services Director.
- 1.2 RS declared an interest in the Parliamentary Archives partnership project (Item 4) as a former member of the Parliamentary Restorations and Renewal Committee. There were no further declarations of interest.

2.0 Public Engagement Strategy 2022-2030

- 2.1 Following the presentation of the outline Public Engagement Strategy at its March meeting, the Board received the next iteration for adoption. The draft presented builds on the ideas discussed previously and develops them further into a full strategic plan coming under a single goal of audience growth, with the five pillars acting as approaches or guiding principles to be applied in the work of all our Public Engagement activities. The horizon of the strategy has also been extended to 2030.
- 2.2 Lines of inquiry related to the current numbers of visitors on site and online and our ambitions to grow them, including visitor profiling and seeking to extend our reach to audiences outside of London and the south-east of England; testing the strategy with external audiences;

opportunities for partnering with The National Archives Trust for fundraising and supporting pilot projects; the impact of Civil Service 2025 on our ambitions and the need to partner and collaborate with other organisations, including other DCMS arm's length bodies and higher education and research networks to support delivery.

2.3 The Board:

- (i) Welcomed and endorsed the Strategy;
- (ii) Felt it was ambitious and that the single strategic goal of audience growth was the right approach and easier to communicate externally;
- (iii) Agreed that the public engagement programme would need to be adequately resourced, and prioritised appropriately within budgets, and endorsed the collaborative approach to delivery;
- (iv) Noted that two exhibitions a year was ambitious and suggested they should be bold in content to attract diverse audiences;
- (v) Suggested looking at partnerships with small specialist organisations, as well as larger ones, to help grow diverse audiences; and
- (vi) Asked that an audience development plan be produced to complement the strategy; MR volunteered his support.

Action by: EJA

3.0 Update on the People and Cultural Programme

3.1 The Board received a paper providing a progress update on the culture programme which will inform the co-creation of a new staff behaviour framework and a refresh of our 'Values'. Owing to Civil Service 2025, the schedule was one month behind, however work was now well underway, with the staff workshops due to come to an end in July and the responses being analysed over August.

3.2 Lines of questioning related to steps being taken to increase staff engagement and whether there were any indications of resistance to the programme. AM noted that using data and insights for workforce planning and the review of career pathways and pay structures, were part of a wider piece work that would support the embedding of the refreshed 'Values'.

3.3 SC shared reflections on building resilience to change within cultural programmes of this kind – by adopting and making tweaks over time so that the change feels evolutionary.

3.4 The Board:

- (i) Welcomed the update and the steps being taken to encourage staff to participate in the engagement programme; and
- (ii) Noted the next steps and looked forward regular updates.

Action by: AM

4.0 Executive Team Updates

4.1 The Board received a report on Executive Team activities.

- 4.2 An update on records series FCO141 was provided, including details of the testing that has been undertaken, which confirmed that historical preservation treatment has been used on the records. Additional external testing would be carried out over the next month to better understand the potential risks to users. We have received a number of Freedom of Information requests and a Parliamentary Question relating to the temporary withdrawal of the records. JJ had also received a number of open letters which were being responded to. DCMS and the FCDO were sighted on the issue and the Advisory Council on National Records and Archives had also been kept updated, under their remit of access to records under the Public Records Act. Updated communications had been published on the website for transparency and we were keen to establish access to the records by September.
- 4.3 The Board also received verbal updates on: (i) discussions with the Cabinet Office to revise guidance on Private Office Papers; (ii) implications of the recently published Information Commissioner’s report on maintaining government transparency and data security in the age of auto-deletion messaging apps; and (iii) the Parliamentary Archives project, including timescales.
- 4.4 The Board:
- (i) Noted the report and updates; and
 - (ii) Received assurance on the steps management were taking to establish access to records series FCO141.

5.0 Non-executive Board Member Verbal Updates

- 5.1 Non-executive Board Members (NEBMs) each provided a verbal update on their recent activity, including insights from other organisations.
- 5.2 RP thanked the 2021-22 Annual Reports and Accounts project team and the National Audit Office on producing a polished document. **POST MEETING NOTE:** The Board received confirmation out-of-committee later that afternoon that the Annual Reports and Accounts 2021-22 had been successfully laid in Parliament and subsequently published on the website.
- 5.3 AW noted attending the DCMS ALB CEO & Chairs’ meeting, and conversations with colleagues at the British Academy and University of Oxford.
- 5.4 RS noted that the Parliamentary All Party Group on Rail Heritage was looking to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in September 2025 and that she had put them in touch with EJA.

6.0 Corporate Reports

June Financials

- 6.1 The Board received the June 2022 Financial Report, which presented a slight overspend that is forecasted to balance by the end of the year. Uncertainty around Civil Service 2025 and the impact of the temporary recruitment pause on staffing costs and attrition rate were noted. *The Gazette* and 1921 Census income and their impact on the budget, and the forecasting of 1921

Census income, were also noted.

Q1 Strategic Business Priorities Update

- 6.2 The Board received the Q1 Strategic Intent business priorities update, as well as the newly updated Business Priorities Executive Governance document with the detailed outputs, outcomes and metrics for 2022-23.
- 6.3 The Board:
- (i) Noted and endorsed the June Financial Report;
 - (ii) Noted and endorsed the Q1 Strategic Intent business priorities update and endorsed the RAG ratings and commentary;
 - (iii) Welcomed sight of the detailed outputs, outcomes and metrics for the seven objectives to enable performance management; and
 - (iv) Suggested including metrics on diversity and social inclusion in tracking audience growth, in line with the newly adopted Public Engagement Strategy.

Action by: NC/EJA

7.0 Update from the Grants and Funding Office

- 7.1 The Board received an update on the work and future plans of the Grants and Funding Office (GFO), which was established in November 2021. The update included The National Archives' success in receiving, as well as awarding grant funding, and current funding opportunities and partnerships. The Board also received an outline of the Grant and Funding Strategy for 2022-2023 and a verbal update on workstreams.
- 7.2 Lines of inquiry related to the linkages with the wider sector leadership review and research programme and strengthening internal governance for greater transparency.
- 7.3 The Board:
- (i) Welcomed the update and endorsed support for the programme and the direction of travel.

8.0 Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log

- 8.1 Subject to minor amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 26 May 2022 were approved as a correct record.
- 8.2 The Board reviewed the Actions Log.

9.0 Any Other Business

Forward Work Programme

- 9.1 The Board reviewed the Forward Work Programme and noted that owing to Civil Service 2025, some items will require rescheduling.

Items for information

- 9.2 The Board received and noted one item for information: Draft Minutes of the 26 May Audit and Risk Committee Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 12.12