

Public Minutes of The National Archives' Board		THE	
		NATIONAL	
Held on 8 December 2022 at 10:00 at The National Archives, Kew and 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
Lucy Fletcher (LF) Director for Public Records Access and Government Services (via VC)
Jeff James (JJ) Chief Executive and Keeper
Valerie Johnson (VJ) Director of Research and Collections (via VC for items 1 to 7)
Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) Commercial Director
Andrea Metcalf (AM) Director of People, Inclusion and Change
John Sheridan (JS) Digital Director
Aaron Smith (AS) Corporate Services Director

Also present:

Eileen Wicks (EW) Vice Chairman of the Friends of The National Archives (for item 8)
Maggie Deighton (MD) Trustee of the Friends of The National Archives (for item 8)
Beth Brunton (BB) Head of Development - Public Engagement (for item 2)
Service Owner - Access to Digital Records (for item 7)
Sam Whaley (SW) Head of Strategy and CEO's Office
Natalie Wright (NWR) Interim Governance Co-ordinator (Minutes)

1.0 Apologies and Declarations of Interest

- 1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Valerie Johnson, who left the meeting early.
- 1.2 Valerie Johnson declared a new interest due to her recent appointment as external examiner at the University of Liverpool. No further declarations of interest were received.

2.0 Business Plan 2035

- 2.1 AW welcomed SW and BB to the meeting. The Board was presented with an outline approach to developing the new four-year business plan in the context of achieving The National Archives' long-term strategic vision *Archives for Everyone*.

- 2.2 SW introduced the item and noted that the outline presented refreshed ways of describing and prioritising the activities and outcomes needed to achieve the strategic vision. There had been productive discussions among Directors, which had contributed to the thinking in the approach.
- 2.3 The Board welcomed the document. Comments were made in relation to legislation, collections policy and challenges around digital accessions. It was noted that The National Archives Trust would be a key stakeholder in delivery and the Board and management looked forward to developing their relationship with the Trust.
- 2.4 SW noted the Board's suggestion to return to conversations on blue sky thinking and welcomed the Board's support in developing a bold timeline with tangible measures for implementation.
- 2.5 There was agreement for further discussion at the Board meeting on 24 January 2023. SW invited feedback before the next meeting.
- 2.6 The Board:
- (i) Welcomed the vision and endorsed the direction of travel;
 - (ii) Proposed a joint away day with The National Archives Trust; and
 - (iii) Looked forward to further discussion on the Business Plan.

Action by: SW

3.0 Board Forward Programme

- 3.1 SW introduced the item, which outlined proposed themes for Board meetings in 2023 and requested feedback on the Forward Programme.
- 3.2 The Board suggested regular updates with The National Archives Trust and reports on the progress of key digital projects and corporate projects, such as Enterprise Resource Planning.

Action by: SW/Head of Governance

4.0 Executive Team Updates

- 4.1 The Board received a report on Executive Team activities.
- 4.2 An update was provided on the implications of the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.
- 4.3 The Board commended the Executive Team on the success of the Treason exhibition.
- 4.4 The Board:
- (i) Noted the report and updates; and
 - (ii) Asked to be kept updated on the Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill.

5.0 Audit & Risk Committee Chair's Update

5.1 RP provided a verbal update on the 7 December Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) meeting. The Committee had had a productive discussion surrounding issues of risk and their mitigations and the value added by internal audit.

5.2 The Board received and noted the verbal update.

6.0 Non-executive Board Member Verbal Updates

6.1 Non-executive Board Members (NEBMs) each provided a verbal update on their recent activity, including insights from other organisations.

6.2 MR noted his meeting with the Executive Director of The National Archives Trust and with EJA and BB on audience development.

6.3 SC noted her meeting with AW and attendance at a recent session on the constituent parts of The National Archives.

6.4 RP noted attending the DCMS Chair's Forum and meeting the Director General.

6.3 RS noted attending a lunch with The National Archives Trust and Kids in Museums day with EJA. RS also noted visiting The Hold archive in Suffolk with JJ and VJ.

6.4 AW noted attending the Treason exhibition launch and lunch with The National Archives Trust. AW also attended a DCMS session on ALB Chairs.

6.6 The Board noted the updates.

7.0 Lessons for the Digital Archive from the 'Find Case Law' Service

7.1 AW welcomed the Service Owner for Access to Digital Records to the meeting. JS introduced the item, explaining that the development of the Find Case Law service was an excellent case study in how The National Archives has evolved into a digital archive and how the Public Records Act, although enacted in the 1950s, provides a legal framework for working with records in all formats. Developing the service illuminated much about the daily management of digital records and what it means to be a living digital archive. Of particular note, the judgments in judicial review cases are both important court records and also valuable records of government decision making.

7.2 The Board welcomed the paper, commenting on growing audiences for the service and how the data collected through the service could be used.

7.3 There was a discussion about the lessons learned from the project, including how the service demonstrated the value of generating more metadata internally and streamlining processes for government departments.

7.4 The Board noted the paper.

7.5 VJ left the meeting at this point.

8.0 Annual Meeting with the Friends of The National Archives

8.1 AW welcomed the Vice Chairman and Trustee of the Friends of The National Archives.

8.2 The Vice Chairman and Trustee set out the current position of the Friends of The National Archives, including recent success in recruiting to several positions.

8.3 There was a discussion on the issues raised by the Friends of The National Archives. The Board thanked the Vice Chairman and Trustee for their contributions to sustain the Friends of The National Archives and expressed their support for their efforts. It was proposed that the Marketing and Communications Team support the Friends of The National Archives in developing a communications strategy.

8.4 The Board:

- (i) Noted the update;
- (ii) Suggested that the positioning of the work of the Friends be the subject of a future discussion; and
- (iii) Looked forward to receiving further reports.

Action by: EJA

9.0 Financial Reports

9.1 The Board received the September Management Accounts, which presented a slight overspend in Capital. AS set out the key areas of risk and noted that the 6 + 6 Forecast showed that this position had rebalanced in successive months.

9.2 There was a discussion about the financial position and risks and mitigations. The Board discussed the nature of the current challenges in recruitment and the volatility of external factors.

9.3 The Board:

- (i) Received and endorsed the 6 + 6 Forecast and the September Management Accounts;
- (ii) Noted the key areas of risks to the budget; and
- (iii) Looked forward to the 9 + 3 Forecast.

Action by: AS

10.0 Minutes, Matters Arising and Action Log

10.1 Subject to minor amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 19 October 2022 were approved as a correct record.

10.2 The Board approved the record of its out-of-committee business.

10.3 The Board reviewed the Actions Log.

11.0 Any Other Business

11.1 There were no items of any other business.

Items for information

11.2 The Board received no items for information.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 13.47