

Minutes of a Special Executive Team Meeting
Date of Meeting: Thursday 1 August 2024 at 10:00
Location: Swan Room & Video Conference (VC)



Present

Saul Nassé (SN) – Chair – Chief Executive and Keeper
Emmajane Avery (EJA) – Director of Public Engagement and Sector Leadership
Neil Curtis (NC) – Chief Operating Officer
Lucy Fletcher (LF) – Director of Public Access & Government Services
Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) – Director of Research & Commercial Development
Andrea Metcalf (AM) – Director of People, Inclusion & Change (via VC)
John Sheridan (JS) – Digital Director

Also in attendance

Asha Bagayat (AB) – Head of Governance (Minutes)
Helen Farmer (HF) – Head of Private Office (via VC)
Marie Twomey-McLeod (MTM) – Head of Finance and Performance
Sam Whaley (SW) – Head of Strategy and CEO's Office

1. Welcome, Apologies & Declaration of Interests

- 1.1. SN welcomed everyone to the meeting and reflected on his first few days in office, including shadowing colleagues on the Research and Inquiries desk. He noted how impressed he was with all the people he had met and the impact of The National Archives on individual lives. He also noted the scale of the opportunities and challenges presented to the organisation, and the need to make some strategic choices around focus and prioritisation. He concluded by praising the expertise of his Executive Team colleagues and emphasised his ethos of collective decision-making.
- 1.2. There were no apologies for absence.
- 1.3. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Q1 Management Accounts 3+9 Financial Forecast

MTM joined the meeting.

- 2.1. MTM presented the 3 + 9 financial report, which forecast an underspend against The National Archives' total budget allocation. Directors had reassessed their Departmental budget allocations, taking into account the effects of the up to 5% pay award, additional Gazette income and delays in recruitment.
- 2.2. ET discussed a proposed shortlist of budget re-allocations.
- 2.3. AM provided an update on the challenges around recruitment and possible mitigations. Following the publication of the Civil Service People Plan 2024-27, the Government People Group was looking at reforms and AM had asked DCMS for The National Archives to be able to participate in this. ET would be kept updated as appropriate.

- 2.4. **Decision:** ET approved the 3 + 9 Forecast and the shortlist of items for budget re-allocation for onwards recommendation to the Finance and Performance Committee and Board.

3. Verbal Update on the Spending Review

- 3.1. NC and MTM provided a verbal update on the item, noting that they were expecting HM Treasury to share the details of the Autumn 2024 Spending Review early next week.
- 3.2. SN suggested ET review *Archives for Everyone* and the four-year plan against ministerial priorities in early 2025, to inform the multi-year Spending Review in spring 2025. This was welcomed by ET.
- 3.3. **Action:** MTM to share details of the Autumn Spending Review with ET out-of-committee and AB to schedule time on next week's agenda for a further discussion on the Spending Review.

MTM left the meeting.

4. AOB

Electrical Repairs

- 4.1. ET noted that electrical repairs would be taking place on Mondays 12 and 24 August, and received assurance that no disruption to services were expected. Key stakeholders had been informed and SN agreed to act as Gold command in the event on an incident.

Further and Higher Education Funding Budget

- 4.2. AM noted that the Further and Higher Education funding budget had been moved to central provision (rather than Directorate) and this had been reflected in the 3+9 Forecast report.

New Minister

- 4.3. HF reported that Sir Chris Bryant, MP had been appointed as the Minister for Creative Industries, Arts and Tourism, which included The National Archives in his portfolio.

There being no further business, the meeting was brought to a close at 11.19.

Executive Team (ET) Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: Thursday 8 August 2024 at 10:00

Location: Swan Room & Video Conference (VC)

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Present

Saul Nassé (SN) – Chair – Chief Executive and Keeper

Emmajane Avery (EJA) – Director of Public Engagement and Sector Leadership

Lucy Fletcher (LF) – Director of Public Access & Government Services

Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) – Director of Research & Commercial Development (via VC)

Andrea Metcalf (AM) – Director of People, Inclusion & Change (via VC)

John Sheridan (JS) – Digital Director (via VC)

Also in attendance

Darren Austin (DA) – Head of Procurement, Project Delivery and Contract Management

Jenna Birley (JB) Governance Manager and Advisory Council Secretary (Minutes)

Helen Farmer (HF) – Head of Private Office (via VC)

Shona Lowe (SL) – Media Manager

Marie Twomey-Mcleod (MTM) – Head of Finance and Performance

1. Welcome, Apologies & Declaration of Interests

- 1.1. SN welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2. Apologies had been received from Neil Curtis.
- 1.3. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes, Actions and Matters Arising

- 2.1. The minutes of the meeting held on 25 July 2024 were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- 2.2. ET reviewed the minutes of the meeting held on 1 August 2024. AM was asked to clarify whether paragraph 4.2 applied to both Further Education and Higher Education. ET asked the wording in paragraphs 2.1 and 2.4 be amended and resubmitted to SN for approval. Subject to these amendments and clearance from SN, ET agreed the minutes as a true and accurate record.
- 2.3. ET reviewed and updated the Action Log.

3. Media Briefing

SL joined the meeting

- 3.1. SL provided a verbal update on recent and upcoming media engagements.
- 3.2. **Action:** SL to share response to recent press enquiry regarding Places of Deposit with SN.

3.3. **Action:** SL to arrange for SN to attend filming arranged for 16 September 2024.

SL left the meeting.

4. Procurement Policies

DA and MTM joined the meeting.

4.1. DA introduced this item which asked ET to discuss and approve proposed amendments to The National Archives' (TNA) procurement policies. These had been amended to reflect the Government's Procurement Regulations 2024 which would take effect on 28 October 2024.

4.2. ET discussed the amendments and noted the risks in the context of additional procedural mitigations and controls in place at TNA. SN asked for a further briefing on these outside of the meeting.

4.3. **Action:** DA to arrange a follow-up briefing with SN. MTM, NG and GMR to attend.

4.4. **Decision:** ET discussed and approved the recommendations made in paragraphs 10, 15, 18 and 19 of the paper.

4.5. ET discussed and noted the next steps as outlined in paragraphs 20 – 25 of the paper.

DA left the meeting.

5. Update on Spending Review

5.1. MTM provided a verbal update on the Spending Review. ET noted the indication that it would be an imposed settlement.

5.2. MTM informed ET that the Spending Review team had been made aware of the pressures on TNA budgets from continued work on Retained EU Law and Freedom of Information requests relating to the transfer of Ministry of Defence (MoD) service records. ET discussed the need to work on the business cases for these, regardless of whether the settlement was to be imposed. SN requested a further briefing on the latter item.

5.3. **Action:** LF to arrange a time with SN provide a further briefing on MoD service records.

5.4. **Action:** JS to update the business case for Retained EU Law.

5.5. LF highlighted the discussions held to date regarding changes to TNA's fees order and how this relates to the MoD service records. ET noted an upcoming discussion and decision to be made at the next Special ET meeting on 15 August 2024.

6. Cascade to Senior Leadership Team (SLT)

- 6.1. ET reviewed the information from the meeting and would cascade as follows:
- 6.2. Procurement policies had been discussed and were being updated. DA would present an item on this at the next SLT meeting.
- 6.3. There is no definitive news on the Spending Review as yet. Teams to prioritise updating TNA's evidence base to support any discussions with the Government's Spending Review team.

7. Any Other Business

Honours Nominations

- 7.1. HF informed ET that TNA had received the commission for Honours Nominations which would be open until around the end of September 2024. ET would receive more information about this by email in due course.

Ministerial Introductory Briefing

- 7.2. HF asked ET to review the briefing documentation for TNA's new Minister as it was due to be sent to them week commencing 12 August. A link to the documentation on Sharepoint would be circulated.
- 7.3. **Action:** ET to review briefing documentation for the new archives Minister by close of play Friday 9 August.

Incidents of Civil Unrest

- 7.4. ET discussed recent incidents of civil unrest that had occurred across the country in recent days, including the impact on TNA staff. All endorsed the recent message sent to staff by JS on the subject, and would continue to signpost their teams to resources available for guidance and support.

8. For information and noting items

- 8.1. ET noted the Corporate Reporting Schedule and the Forward Agenda.

The meeting closed at 11:40.

Minutes of a Special Executive Team Meeting
Date of Meeting: Thursday 15 August 2024 at 10:00
Location: Swan Room



Present

Saul Nassé (SN) – Chair – Chief Executive and Keeper
Neil Curtis (NC) – Chief Operating Officer
Lucy Fletcher (LF) – Director of Public Access & Government Services
Andrea Metcalf (AM) – Director of People, Inclusion & Change
John Sheridan (JS) – Digital Director

Also in attendance

Jenna Birley (JB) – Governance Manager and Advisory Council Secretary (Minutes)
Marie Twomey-Mcleod (MTM) – Head of Finance and Performance
Sian Williams (SW) – HR Operations Manager

1. Welcome, Apologies & Declaration of Interests

- 1.1. SN welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies had been received from Gemma Maclagan Ram and Emmajane Avery.
- 1.2. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Pay Award 2024 – 2025

SW joined the meeting.

- 2.1. AM introduced this item and discussed the three options to progress the pay award work as identified in the paper.
- 2.2. ET discussed the options and their associated outcomes. Option three was not deemed viable as ET agreed the outcomes of implementation would be less favourable than options one and two.
- 2.3. ET debated the merits of implementing option one or two and decided option one was preferred, principally due to staff expectations around pay for 2024.
- 2.4. **Decision:** ET agreed to progress the pay award work in line with option one as outlined in the accompanying paper.
- 2.5. **Action:** JB to ask Government Relations Manager to send the 2023 DCMS submission to AM.
SW left the meeting.

3. Update on the Spending Review

MTM joined the meeting

- 3.1. NC and MTM provided a verbal update on the Spending Review which would be a two-phase process.
- 3.2. ET noted that The National Archives (TNA) would need to submit evidence to His

Majesty's Treasury (HMT) as part of the process and discussed areas of focus to evidence financial need.

- 3.3. ET noted the settlement discussions had not included funding for retained EU law. This would be an area of work to develop a business case for funding alongside Freedom of Information and TNA's increasing workload concerning official inquiries.
- 3.4. ET noted the deadline for final submissions to HMT was 13 September 2024.
- 3.5. **Action:** JS, NC and LF to complete their Directorates' work on the spending review bids and present to SN by 23 August.

4. Freedom of Information (FOI) Compliance

- 4.1. LF introduced this item which asked ET to consider amending TNA FOI service provisions to a charging model, particularly for requests concerning Ministry of Defence (MoD) service records.
- 4.2. SN highlighted the need for robust data to more clearly demonstrate the FOI processing workflows and interlinked issues of demand, cost and capacity. A model that showed these pressures, alongside a defined policy and legal position, would be helpful in articulating TNA's case for resource to HMT.
- 4.3. **Action:** MTM to work with Kate Todd and Chris Royds to demonstrate progress made on the MoD FOI project to date in terms of demand and resourcing and present this to LF and NC by Wednesday 21 August.
- 4.4. **Action:** LF and NC to develop the MoD project plan from work to date, to full compliance and how that would be achieved, to present to SN as part of the spending review work by Friday 23 August.

The meeting closed at 11.50.

Executive Team Meeting Minutes

Date of Meeting: 22 August 2024 at 10:00

Location: Swan Room & Video Conference (VC)

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Present:

Saul Nassé (SN) – Chair – Chief Executive Officer

Emmajane Avery (EJA) – Director of Public Engagement and Sector Leadership

Neil Curtis (NC) – Chief Operating Officer

Lucy Fletcher (LF) – Director of Public Access and Government Services

Andrea Metcalf (AM) – Director of People, Inclusion and Change

John Sheridan (JS) – Digital Director

Also in Attendance:

Sam Whaley (SW) – Head of Strategy and CEO's Office

Asha Bagayat (AB) – Head of Governance

Head of Strategic Insight (via VC)

Governance Coordinator (Minutes)

1. Apologies & Declarations of Interest

1.1 Apologies for absence were received from Gemma Maclagan Ram.

1.2 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes & Action Log

2.1 The Executive Team (ET) reviewed and approved the minutes of the meetings held on 08 and 15 August 2024 with no amendments.

2.2 ET reviewed and updated the Actions Log.

3. July Management Accounts

3.1 NC introduced the item and talked ET through the July Management Accounts, which presented an overspend, in part due to the Pay Award being higher than anticipated. This was expected to balance in the next quarter.

3.2 ET discussed upcoming capital projects in relation to the accounts.

3.3 **Decision:** ET approved the July Management Accounts.

4. Spending Review

Head of Strategic Insight joined the meeting via VC.

4.1 NC provided a verbal update on the Spending Review.

4.2 Certain pressures on The National Archives' budgets were identified, which were as follows:

- MoD FOI staffing
- Upcoming Inquiries
- Storage cost
- Retained EU Law
- Civil Service pay award

4.3 NC confirmed that he was comfortable with the projected figures and confident with presenting the first draft of the narrative to ET on 5 September and meeting the HM Treasury deadline of the submission by Friday 13 September 2024.

4.4 **Action:** SN to meet with the Chair of the Board to discuss Spending Review updates.

4.5 **Decision:** Work was commissioned to work up Pressure and Business Cases for review on 02 September 2024.

5. Freedom of Information (FOI) Data

5.1 The Head of Strategic Insight talked ET through the FOI Data model, explaining the assumptions and parameters being used to analyse the data. It was explained to ET that parameters such as dates could be changed to view the impact on compliance and that as we receive more data on variables, we can build on the model.

5.2 The Head of Strategic Insight demonstrated forecasts for various items that were generated by the model. NC noted the model pointed to similar levels of expenditure/FTE as were presented in the earlier business case presented to our HMT spending team earlier in the year.

5.3 ET discussed how the model might be affected by assorted variables.

5.4 **Decision:** ET noted the FOI Data model.

6. AOB

Sunflower lanyards (EJA & AM)

6.1 EJA and AM had received a submission from the Head of Visitor Experience proposing that we become an official corporate member of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme, which would give us access to training and resources. EJA and AM had agreed to share the cost and sought ET's endorsement and corporate commitment to the scheme.

6.2 **Decision:** ET unanimously agreed to this.

Outputs from Performance Executive Committee (NC)

6.3 The Digital Archiving team had brought a paper to the Performance Executive Committee yesterday regarding their resourcing.

6.4 **Action:** To be discussed at the next ET on 05 September 2024.

6.5 The Performance Executive Committee had agreed with a proposal to a multi-year commitment and minimum spend with Amazon Web Services.

6.6 **Action:** NC to brief SN and potentially bring the paper to the next ET.

There being no further business, the meeting was brought to a close at 11:30.