

# Terms of Reference of the Executive Team



**Note:** These terms of reference should be read alongside [The National Archives' Framework Document](#), [Statement of Public Task](#) and the terms of reference for [The National Archives' Board](#). Collectively these documents describe the statutory and non-statutory duties and responsibilities of the Chief Executive and Keeper and the governance structure of The National Archives.

## Overall Purpose and Objectives

1. Working with The National Archives' Board, the Executive Team is responsible for the day-to-day operations and management of The National Archives; for upholding propriety, regularity, value for money and for the safeguarding of public funds; for upholding the values of the organisation, as well as those expressed in the Seven Principles of Public Life and for the care of its staff.
2. The Executive Team supports the Chief Executive and Keeper in their capacity as:
  - (i) Keeper of Public Records to discharge their statutory responsibilities in respect of the selection, preservation and access to public records in their charge as set out in the Public Records Act and associated legislation and the Freedom of Information Act 2000.
  - (ii) Principal Accounting Officer for The National Archives by ensuring that the organisation is run on the basis of the standards, in terms of governance, decision-making and financial management, that are set out in Managing Public Money, and
  - (iii) Sole Historical Manuscripts Commissioner, King's Printer of Acts of Parliament, King's Printer for Scotland, Government Printer for Northern Ireland and Controller of His Majesty's Stationery Office, as set out in section 5.1 of The National Archives' Framework Document.
3. The Executive Team provides leadership and sets The National Archives' strategic direction and determines its corporate and business priorities. It makes key investment and project decisions and ensures that risks are both identified and effectively managed.
4. The objectives of the Executive Team are to:
  - Be the executive decision-making body of the organisation.
  - Fulfil The National Archives' statutory and legal responsibilities.
  - Define and deliver its strategic and business priorities.
  - Drive and manage business and financial performance.
  - Drive innovation, transparency and efficiencies that support delivery of strategic objectives and give value for money.
  - Identify high-level risks, ensure their effective mitigation, and ensure business continuity.
  - Set corporate policies.
  - Direct and support managers to deliver key investments and major projects.
  - Lead strategic staff management and resourcing.
  - Lead people and change programmes.

- Promote the values and culture of the organisation, including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.

## **Membership**

5. The Executive Team members are the Chief Executive and Keeper and all the Executive Directors of The National Archives.
6. The Head of Strategy and Chief Executive's Office (or their nominee) will attend Executive Team meetings in order to provide support and advice to the Chief Executive and Keeper on their various statutory roles and the Executive Team on a wide range of issues, including Parliamentary and strategic communications issues.
7. The Head of Governance will also usually attend meetings to provide advice on corporate governance issues, support the Executive Team in following due process and support and advise on the interaction and relationship with The National Archives' Board.
8. In exceptional circumstances, executive directors can nominate deputies from the Senior Leadership Team to attend Executive Team meetings on their behalf, at the discretion of the Chair.
9. Any other persons deemed necessary by the Executive Team can be invited to attend meetings.

## **Role of The Chief Executive and Keeper**

10. The role and responsibilities of the Chief Executive and Keeper are set out in section 9 of the Framework Document.

## **Role of Executive Directors**

11. As a member of the Executive Team, the role of each executive director is to:
  - Lead, manage and support managers in their directorate on the delivery of business objectives.
  - Play an active part in the overall management of The National Archives.
  - Lead corporately for the whole, as well as their own areas of expertise.
  - Raise key issues around risk, finance, resourcing, and new developments in order to allow collective team discussion and information sharing.
  - Ensure that the right information and evidence is made available to the Executive Team to allow informed challenge and debate, to measure and stretch performance and give assurance to The National Archives' Board.
  - Champion, support and engage the workforce for a sustainable future, including taking joint responsibility for the delivery of the People, Inclusion and Change strategic plan (which includes the strategic workforce plan).
  - Uphold the values of the organisation and adhere to the principles set out below.

## **Executive Team Principles**

12. To work together collectively and effectively, members of the Executive Team will:

- Support and reinforce collective team decisions.
- Share problems and contribute to solutions.
- Provide and invite constructive challenge.
- Respect each other's expertise while giving direct and timely feedback.
- Value open communication.
- Demonstrate, through active leadership, their commitment to The National Archives' strategic objectives, values and culture, including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.
- Lead by example to provide purpose and direction for each other and for The National Archives as a whole.
- Cascade the content of meetings and decisions made to Heads of Department and the wider organisation, as appropriate.

### **Conflicts of Interest**

13. The Executive Team are bound by the Conflicts of Interest Policy for Board members.
14. Whilst the Executive Team makes collective decisions and works on a consensus basis. In the unlikely event that the Chief Executive and Keeper overrules the Executive Team, for example on Accounting Officer issues or duties placed upon them by the Public Records Act, Letters Patent or Royal Warrant, a record will be kept.

### **Meeting arrangements and governance**

15. The Executive Team will normally meet fortnightly, or as required by the business. Extraordinary or more frequent meetings may be called upon the advice of the Head of Governance, in consultation with the Chief Executive and Keeper and/or the Chief Operating Officer. The Executive Team may also hold strategy days and workshops, as required.
16. Meetings will usually be held at Kew but may also be held remotely or at alternative locations, as appropriate.
17. The Chair will be the Chief Executive and Keeper. Executive directors may chair meetings at the discretion of the Chief Executive and Keeper.
18. The Executive Team may conduct business out-of-committee. In the event business is considered out-of-committee, it will ordinarily be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting to fulfil corporate report requirements.
19. The quorum for meetings is three executive directors. In the absence of a quorum, the executive directors may go ahead with an informal discussion, any decision will be ratified at the next quorate meeting.
20. Papers will be circulated at least two working days prior to the date of the meeting. Tabled papers will only be permitted at the discretion of the Chief Executive and Keeper or the Chief Operating Officer.
21. Draft minutes will be reviewed by the chair of the meeting, then circulated to the Executive Team for formal approval at the next meeting. The Head of Governance will be

responsible for holding the records.

22. A public set of minutes will be published on the website as part of The National Archives' publication scheme. Once approved minutes will be collated into monthly batches and published as soon as practically possible.
23. Secretariat support will be provided by the Head of Governance, or their nominee. They will be responsible for arranging and supporting the meetings, producing and publishing minutes in line with The National Archives' publication scheme and maintaining corporate records.

### **Standing agenda**

24. Standing agenda items will include:

Monthly:

- Financial reporting

Quarterly:

- Financial Forecasts
- Progress reporting on delivery of Business Priorities
- Review of corporate risks
- Internal audit reporting

Annually:

- Review of corporate risk categories and associated risk appetites (risk management policy)
- Approval of the annual report and accounts
- Review of and setting of business priorities
- Review and approval of the budget
- Approval of the Internal Audit Plan

Biannually

- Review of the Team's terms of reference

### **Executive Sub-committees**

25. The Executive Team may establish Executive sub-committees as appropriate for it to fulfil its functions. Sub-committees should have appropriate terms of references agreed by the Executive Team, which set out its responsibilities, authority delegated to it and accountabilities.
26. The Estates Strategy Committee and the Performance Executive Committee have been formally constituted as sub-committees of the Executive Team.
27. The terms of reference for the sub-committees will be reviewed and approved biennially by the Executive Team.

28. Executive Sub-Committees shall routinely and regularly report to the Executive Team on the exercise of their delegated authority.
29. While the Executive Team may make use of sub-committees to assist its consideration of matters, it retains responsibility for providing strategic and operational leadership to the organisation.

### **Sub-bodies and other forums**

30. The Executive Team may establish further decision-making bodies to support the Chief Executive and Keeper in the discharging of their statutory responsibilities and enable the organisation to function and deliver its Public Task. In terms of governance, such bodies will be termed as 'Sub-bodies'.
31. Sub-bodies will be agreed by the Executive Team and typically led by an Executive Director. They will have appropriate terms of references agreed by the Executive Team, which set out its responsibilities, authority delegated and accountabilities.
32. The Takedown Panel, the Reclosure Panel, *Archives Unlocked* Steering Group, Discovery Board, Departmental Security Committee and Health and Safety Committee have been formally designated as sub-bodies.
33. The chair of the sub-body will be responsible for routinely reporting, either to the Executive Team or directly to the Chief Executive and Keeper, on the exercise of their delegated authority.
34. The Executive Team may also establish major project groups, either on a temporary or permanent basis to fulfil its functions. They will have appropriate terms of references agreed by the Executive Team, which set out its roles, responsibilities and accountabilities.
35. The Parliamentary Archives Steering Group, ETNA Project Group and the Ministry of Defence Service Personnel Records Steering Group have been formally designated as major project groups.

### **Review**

36. The Executive Team terms of reference will be reviewed biannually, or earlier if necessary.
37. These terms of reference were last reviewed and agreed on 25 July 2024. The next scheduled review date is July 2026.