

NATIONAL LIBRARY OF WALES

Minutes of the Meeting of the Board

Held in Aberystwyth

On Friday, 30 September 2016

OPEN SESSION 10.30 – 1.00

Present:

Trustees:

Rhodri Glyn Thomas, President	Colin R. John, Treasurer	Iwan Davies
Phil Cooper	Roy Roberts	Susan Davies
Hugh Thomas	Lis Siberry	Roy Evans
Lord Aberdare	Huw Williams	Richard Houdmont

Executive Team:

Linda Tomos	Chief Executive and Librarian
David Michael	Director of Corporate Resources
Pedr ap Llwyd	Director of Collections and Public Programmes

Staff:

Carol Edwards	Governance Manager and Clerk to the Board of Trustees
Annwen Isaac	Human Resources Consultant
Mererid Jones	Head of Finance and Enterprise [for Sections 4 and 5]

Also in attendance:

Mary Ellis	MALD
Rebecca Johnson	MALD
Siân Thomas	Partnership Council
Doug Jones	Partnership Council

Section 1

1.1 President's Welcome and Apologies for Absence

The President, Rhodri Glyn Thomas, welcomed all those present to the meeting.

Apologies

No apologies were received in advance, but following the meeting, apologies were received from Dyfrig Jones.

1.2 Declarations of Interest

Huw Williams had declared an interest, as he is a member of Geldards LLP, and since 1 September 2015 Geldards has been amongst a number of companies appointed by the National Procurement Service for Wales Solicitors Framework, which the Library intends on instructing, in order to meet its requirements in terms of legal services. Also, Geldards continues to advise the Library on a number of ongoing issues, under a previous agreement for legal services, awarded by competitive tender.

Liz Siberry declared an interest in item 2.1, as she is a member of the University of Wales Council.

Susan Davies declared an interest in item 2.1, as she continues to be affiliated with Aberystwyth University.

Iwan Davies also declared an interest in item 2.1, as he is a higher education lecturer.

1.3 Approve the minutes of the meeting held on 22 July 2016

It was noted that the following amendments are needed to 6.2 in the English minutes - "outcomes" is correct, and not "outputs".

Under 4.1, it was explained that the rent of the Commission of £95k is part of the money received last year, and negotiations are ongoing to attempt to align the rent with the financial year.

Linda confirmed that the draft Income Raising Strategy will be ready by the meeting of the Board in November.

Section 2 'Live' matters and those which require a decision

2.1 Higher Education Partnerships – the way forward

It was agreed that Linda would prepare a paper on the principles which will highlight the possible options, in terms of forming partnerships with higher education institutions. Linda will liaise with WHELP (Wales Higher Education Libraries Forum) and HEW (Higher Education Wales), to facilitate Linda's understanding of university strategies and to seek their views on this development.

ACTION: THE MEMBERS DECIDED TO ASK LINDA TO PREPARE A PAPER ON THE PRINCIPLES WHICH ARE IMPORTANT TO THE LIBRARY WHEN CONSIDERING ESTABLISHING PARTNERSHIPS WITH HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

2.2 Draft Marketing Strategy and 6 Monthly Plan

Linda presented the draft Strategy and 6 Monthly Plan, and she thanked the Marketing subcommittee for their comments and negotiations in developing this.

Attachment 1 contains a work plan for February - September, and Linda wished to give thanks to everyone who has collaborated to achieve the objectives so far. The Delivery Group has now adopted marketing and promotion as part of its core work, and this is the most significant change that has occurred internally; this Group will also be responsible for the new Marketing Strategy.

Nevertheless, the Promotion Unit will continue to deal with the press and organise internal and external events. The press have highlighted some interesting and positive stories about the Library since January 2016, and this in itself is proof of success.

It was noted that the Annual Review had been favourably received, and that the intention next year is to prepare a digital version of the Review.

Our presence on social media and electronic marketing has also improved, especially on Wikipedia. In order to try and promote and increase our digital presence, we intend on appointing an Officer specialising in digital promotion within the resources available.

Linda wished to acknowledge the input of the Marketing subcommittee into the Strategy, and she also wished to note that this is a preliminary document, but it is a document that strives to convince staff of the importance of marketing, and assure them that training is available to them in this area.

Comments were received from Members, and Linda will consider them fully when preparing a further draft.

ACTION: THE MEMBERS DECIDED THAT THE MARKETING SUBCOMMITTEE SHOULD CONTINUE TO MEET, AND THAT IT SHOULD PRESENT A REPORT AND A FURTHER PLAN TO THE MEETING IN NOVEMBER.

2.3 Draft Internal Communications and Engagement Strategy

Linda presented the Strategy and indicated that she was eager to conduct an internal consultation with the staff and the unions, because ownership of this Strategy by the staff is paramount.

It was noted that the delivery indicators in Appendix 1 are preliminary figures, and that discussions will need to be held with staff, to see if these are practical. They are based on questionnaires completed in the past and benchmarking with other institutions.

It was noted that point 2.2 in the Welsh version is different to the English; it was agreed to reconcile both versions and then distribute the amended version.

After she has received comments from the Members, Linda will review the Strategy and hold discussions with the staff. Linda will approach the Board in November with a version approved by the staff and the unions.

ACTION: RECONCILE THE WELSH AND ENGLISH VERSIONS AND DISTRIBUTE THE AMENDED VERSIONS TO THE MEMBERS

2.4 The Library's Strategy 2017 – 2020

The President indicated that the meeting in November will focus on discussing the Strategy, and he invited the Members to a special meeting on Thursday afternoon, 3 November, to discuss the Strategy, so that we may decide on and confirm the decisions at the meeting on 4 November.

Linda indicated that she intended on drafting a consultation document, to share with the staff firstly, and that the final document will be presented for approval by the Board in February, before sending the document to the Minister.

Linda explained that the title chosen, Nation's Memory / Cof y Genedl, takes the Library back to its roots as a copyright library, and to the core services. Linda was also eager to see the next Strategy focus on the Library's strengths, and that we need to stress to the Minister what makes us different to other libraries and institutions.

The President reiterated Linda's comments and added that the Board and managers must inform the Minister of what will be the direction of the Library in the next 10 years, and that they ask for his support moving forward. The President asked the Members to send their comments on the preliminary draft to Linda in writing.

ACTION: MEMBERS TO SEND THEIR COMMENTS ON THE PRELIMINARY DRAFT STRATEGY 2017 - 2020 TO LINDA IN WRITING

Section 3 Information and Updates

3.1 Appointment of Vice President and Trustees

Following the meeting of the Board, the panel will convene to consider the applications for the role of Vice President and three Trustees. The interviews will be held on 27 October, with the successful candidates starting on 1 December. 13 candidates have applied, and the short-listing panel will consider the applications in the context of the Library's direction and the requirements in terms of skills and experience. There will be two Welsh Government appointments and one Library appointment. The Vice President will be a Welsh Government appointment also.

3.2 Matters associated with the building

Huw Williams declared a specific interest in this matter, as Geldards continues to advise the Library with regards to the fire.

David Michael gave an update on the fire. The Library would not be taking action against the building company nor the builder's insurance company, but Geldards would be taking action against the architect's insurers. A response is expected by Christmas.

3.3 HLF / BBC Bid

A decision regarding the Library's application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, to receive the BBC archive at the Library, will be made by the Lottery Board in London on 15 November. Positive talks have already been held, and procuring this archive would offer the public access to an important archive in the history of broadcasting in Wales.

3.4 Use of the Library's seal

A report was presented to the Trustees on the use of the Library's seal; this is in line with point 12.2 of the 2006 Regulations.

3.5 Six Monthly Progress Report on the Operational Plan

A report was presented to the Members on the progress made against the targets. The Members did not comment on the report.

Section 4 Financial Matters

4.1 Budgetary Report up to 30.08.16

The financial situation of staffing the Library is fairly positive, due to the short term vacancies.

The Library has received a Purchasing Grant of £200,000 towards expenditure in 2016-2017, and will receive an additional £105,000 towards developing technical infrastructure. 4 projects have been presented to the Welsh Government regarding the expenditure of the £105,000 and the Library is waiting to hear which projects have been successful.

The commercial income of the Library is above the 5 month target set. The Commercial Income Group meets regularly to focus on this work, but it was noted that there is a problem with the online shop, which is not performing well. There are plans to improve the promotion of the online shop in the coming months.

Because Pendinas has made a loss up to the end of August, mainly due to the cost of opening on Saturdays and the Bank Holiday, it was suggested that maybe we should consider installing payment machines instead of staffing Pendinas.

It was noted also that the Library will have to pay an apprenticeship levy of £25,000 for the two apprentices employed via the Friends' Scheme. The Library needs to make further enquiries into this matter.

ACTION: FURTHER ENQUIRIES NEED TO BE MADE WITH REGARDS TO THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY THAT THE LIBRARY SHALL HAVE TO PAY

4.2 Evaluation of the Pension Scheme

The Library has received a draft assessment of the Pension Scheme, and the Pension Scheme Committee will meet with the Actuary at the Library next week to discuss the assessment.

The cost of funding the scheme for the future is a problem, and consideration will need to be given to the cost of contributions and how they could be funded. A further report will be presented at the next meeting of the Board in November.

The President thanked Colin John, Chairman of the Pension Scheme Committee, and David Michael for their work in this area.

Section 5 Reports from Committees

Colin presented a verbal report on the meeting of the Financial Planning Subcommittee, held on 12 September, and started by thanking Huw Williams for allowing the meeting to be held at Geldards offices in Cardiff.

In the morning, a presentation was given by two representatives from Investec, who are in charge of the Library's private funds, and Colin noted that both portfolios are performing satisfactorily at present. It was suggested that the presentation should be placed on the Members website.

One matter which will require the Members attention shortly is whether we should consider withdrawing some of the money in the short term, in order to compensate the budget for the next year or two, or to match project funds.

The Investment Policy was discussed and there is further work to be done before it is presented to the Board for comment and approval.

The meeting of the Subcommittee was held in the afternoon, with Linda joining the meeting by telephone. The financial situation of the Library up to the end of July was discussed, along with the budget for 2017 - 2018 and any matters which could affect the budget – pension scheme, changes to redundancy packages and the funding that will be available next year.

The performance of Investec, the company which has been taking care of the Library's portfolio for a number of years, was also discussed. Over a 5 year period, their performance is 46.8% against a benchmark of 46.5%. There is no problem with the company but, as good governance practice, Colin suggested that the contract should go out to tender during 2017 - 2018.

The Pension Scheme is also being reviewed, as part of the Committee's activity.

It was noted that Terms of Reference do not exist for this Group, and the Members agreed to draft Terms of Reference shortly, but that we should wait for the report of the Welsh Audit Office before deciding to make the Committee one of the Boards' standing committees.

ACTION: PLACE THE PRESENTATION BY INVESTEC ON THE MEMBERS WEBSITE

ACTION: IT WAS AGREED THAT TERMS OF REFERENCE BE DRAFTED FOR THIS GROUP

Section 6 President and Librarian's Business

6.1 President's Business

The President indicated that the performance indicators for April – July and the Highlights Report will be placed on the Members website, as soon as possible after the end of the reporting period.

6.2 Librarian's Business

Linda thanked the Board and individual Members for their time and advice, and she welcomed any questions that the Members had, either for her or the two Directors.

Any Other Business

Huw Williams wished to thank Linda and Pedr for arranging for him to have a copy of the picture of Sir Samuel Griffiths, Australia's first Senior Justice, to give as a gift to the present Chief Justice. The picture was presented to the Chief Justice at a dinner on 15 September, and will be hung at the High Court in Canberra.

To close the meeting, the President thanked the Members for their collaboration in moving the Library forward, and noted that he looks forward to an exciting and challenging meeting in November, when the next Strategy will be discussed.