

## Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of the National Library of Ireland

Thursday 27 April 2023 at 11:00

Hybrid Meeting: Art Room, National Library of Ireland,  
7-8 Kildare Street, Dublin 2, D02 P638 and video conferencing

<p><b>Board</b></p>	<p><b>Present:</b> Eoin McVey, Chairperson Prof Ciarán Ó hÓgartaigh, Deputy Chairperson Dr Marie Bourke Prof Maeve Conrick John Grenham Lisa Grimm Lorelei Harris (1-9.1; 9.5 via video conferencing) Dr Conor Kostick Prof Kalpana Shankar (via video conferencing)</p> <p><b>Apologies:</b> Jennifer Taaffe Caitriona Sharkey</p>
<p><b>Staff</b></p>	<p><b>In attendance:</b> Dr Audrey Whitty, Director (1-14) Orla Sweeney, Board Secretary (1-14) Katy Lumsden, Head of Human Resources (7; 8.1; 8.2; 9.5) Eoghan Ó Carragáin, Head of Digital Collections (9.3; 10.2) Brian O'Donnell, Head of Estates (9.2) Kathleen Ruane, Head of Finance-CRO (9.4; 10.1; 10.2)</p>
<p>Note: There is one vacancy on the Board. All Board members were present for the full duration of the meeting unless otherwise stated. (1-14) denotes where a Board or staff member was not present/in attendance for the full duration, but present/in attendance for certain sections of the minutes.</p>	

## **1. Interests and procedural matters**

The Chairperson confirmed that the meeting was quorate. In response to the Chairperson's request for the Board to declare any conflicts of interests, none were declared by the Board.

**The Board meeting was quorate. The Board declared no conflicts of interests.**

Note: All Board papers were circulated in advance of the Board meeting unless otherwise stated and taken as read.

## **2. Draft minutes of the Board meeting of 23 February 2023 and their publication**

**The Board approved the draft minutes of the Board meeting of 23 February 2023 with no amendments, and the publication of the approved minutes with redactions as appropriate.**

## **3. Matters arising**

The Director outlined the relevant Board paper.

**The Board noted the matters arising action table.**

**The Board also noted that the approved Travel and Subsistence Policy (NLI-PRV2-24) will not be amended to allow for only lowest engine capacity (up to 1200cc), under the Motor Travel Rates, where a private vehicle is used for official business. The amendment had been considered by the Board as a potential initiative in support of greener vehicles; however, the Executive advised the Board that the amendment would be contrary to Circular 16/22 and the said Policy provides that, where travel is required for official business, public bus/rail should be the primary mode of transport and private vehicles can only be authorised by management, in advance, in very limited circumstances.**

**The Board requested that the Executive review the Board papers.**

In making this request, the Board referenced:

- The following recommendation in the final report on the external evaluation on the effectiveness of the Board and its Committees – “A plan to be initiated to ensure that the structure and format of all papers submitted for Board and Committee consideration incorporates a concise and coherent executive summary (without compromising the substance of members’ information requirements) and follows the 2-4-8 protocol where possible and with a greater use of dashboard reporting for trends, info-graphics and exception reporting to be considered.”
- Plain language style guides; and
- The quantity of papers submitted to the Board.

#### **4. Executive Report**

The Director outlined the relevant Board paper. In addition, the Director verbally briefed the Board on the Capital Development Project as follows:

- Plans for the official opening of new Manuscripts Reading Room which has been relocated from the first floor to the ground floor of 2-3 Kildare Street.
- Clarifications on the Interim Business Case, as requested by the D/TCAGSM Strategic Policy Divisions, had been submitted.
- The status on the submission of the Project’s planning permission application arising from communications with the Project’s partners.

**The Board noted the Executive Report and the Director’s verbal briefing on the Capital Development Project. The Board discussed the Capital Development Project and noted the importance of progressing the Project with the submission of the planning permission application on the scheduled date.**

With reference to HR matters and recruitment, as outlined in the Executive’s Report, the Chairperson provided the Board with a brief overview of the NLI’s staffing challenges since the recession of 2008. **The Board discussed recruitment and noted its dissatisfaction with the likelihood of an underspend in payroll at year end due to delays in recruitment sanctions being provided to the NLI.**

The Director informed the Board of the Executive's consideration in procuring a benchmark report for the NLI in comparison to peer national libraries. The Board noted that, should the Executive proceed in procuring such a report, the Board would be interested to know the following in relation to peer national libraries:

- Number and roles of staff;
- Numbers and roles of contractors; and
- Contrasts in the functions and activities undertaken by the NLI's peers in comparison to the NLI.

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) noted that such a report would be of interest to the ARC too in light of the internal audit report on Human Resources and People Management, and the Committee is always open to engagement with the Executive on such matters.

## **5. NLI Strategic Organisational Priorities 2023**

The Director outlined the relevant Board paper. The Board discussed the following matters with the Director:

- Maximum flexibility in the fit out under the Capital Development Project so exhibitions can be refreshed, for example, with other NLI collections and collaborations etc.
- Advance notice to readers on new developments in revealing the collections, for example, by publishing the Digital Steering Group priorities, additions to the catalogue etc.
- Digital Collections' policies including considerations for Artificial Intelligence.
- Digitisation of newspaper microfilms.

**The Board noted the NLI's Strategic Organisational Priorities 2023 as follows: (i) Progress the NLI Capital Development Project "Re-imagining the National Library"; (ii) Progress the West Wing Exhibitions & Engagement Project; (iii) Recruitment; (iv) Digitisation: preparing for the next 10 years; and (v) Philanthropic/Development planning.**

## 6. Board Committees

### 6.1 **Audit and Risk Committee: Report of 12 April 2023; Minutes of 10 February 2023; Annual Report 2022.**

The Chairperson of the Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) provided the Board with an additional briefing in relation to the following Board papers:

- Chairperson's Report on the ARC meeting of 10 February 2023: The Committee Chairperson informed the Board that the ARC had approved the scoping document for the Internal Audit on Collection Acquisitions by email on 3 May 2023 which had been amended upon the ARC's recommendation to the internal auditor to clarify and expand the scope on third-party valuations.
- ARC's Annual Report 2022 to the Board: The Committee Chairperson noted his appreciation to Kathleen Ruane, Head of Finance-CRO; Orla Sweeney, ARC Secretary; and Susan O'Donnell in the Director's Office for supporting the Committee in its work.

**The Board noted: The Committee Chairperson's report on the ARC meeting of 12 April 2023; the approved minutes of the ARC meeting of 10 February 2023; and the ARC's Annual Report 2022 to the Board.**

**The Board also noted that the Chairperson of the Board and the Committee Chairperson had agreed that the Director should attend all ARC meetings going forward. (note: Director (as a member of staff) is not a member of the ARC).**

### 6.2 **Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry: Report of 28 March 2023; [REDACTED] Minutes of 23 November 2022**

The Chairperson of the Committee on Genealogy and Heraldry (CGH) provided the Board with a verbal briefing on the Committee meeting of 23 November 2022 and 28 March 2023.

The Committee Chairperson informed the Board that:

- a sub-group of the Committee had been established to explore the statutory functions of the CGH and to offer the Board, the Director and the Chief Herald a range of possible options to broaden the reach of the Office of the Chief Herald and the NLI's genealogy and heraldry offerings, keeping in mind the severe constraints of time and personnel under which the Library operates.
- the sub-group submitted a draft report to the CGH at its meeting of 28 March 2023 and a further draft of the report will be submitted to the CGH at its next meeting. The date of the next CGH meeting may take place later in the summer in line with the Executive's availability.
- the Executive continues to be consulted on any actions proposed in the draft reports.
- the CGH will submit a final draft of the report to the Board in due course.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**The Board noted: The Committee Chairperson's verbal report on the CGH meeting of 23 November 2022 and 28 March 2023, and the approved minutes of the CHG meeting of 23 November 2022.**

### 6.3 Readers' Advisory Committee

The Chairperson of the Readers' Advisory Committee (RAC) provided the Board with a verbal briefing on the Committee meeting of 19 April 2023 and noted the RAC's intention to submit further statistical information on the NLI's library and information services to the Board at regular intervals.

The Committee Chairperson informed the Board of the status of two projects the RAC would like to prioritise during its term:

- (i) a multi-functional NLI mobile unit has been paused; and
- (ii) an integrated library-wide search engine for Ireland is being progressed by the Executive through the Local Management Government Agency and in turn the public libraries.

**The Board noted: The Committee Chair's verbal report on the RAC meeting of 19 April 2023; the approved minutes of the RAC meeting of 8 November 2022; and the RAC's Annual Report 2022 to the Board.**

**The Board approved, in line with the RAC Chairperson's recommendation, the appointment of the Director, Dr Audrey Whitty as an ordinary member of the RAC and noted the membership of the RAC as follows:**

Name	Position	Province (National Cultural Institutions Act 1997)	Date appointed by the Board
Lorelei Harris	RAC Chairperson and Board member	Leinster	7 Oct 2021
Dr Audrey Whitty	RAC ordinary member and Director	Leinster	27 Apr 2023
Lian Bell	RAC ordinary member	Leinster	10 Feb 2022
Liam O'Brien	RAC ordinary member	Munster	10 Feb 2022
Harry Hughes	RAC ordinary member	Connacht	10 Feb 2022
Prof Mary O'Dowd	RAC ordinary member	Ulster	10 Feb 2022

Note: The Board addressed agenda items concerning human resources in the following order:

- (i) 8.2 Human Resources: Safe To Create Programme
- (ii) 9.5 Human Resources: Specialist Recruitment Contractor

- (iii) 7. Presentation: Human Resources – Workforce Plan 2022-2025
- (iv) 8.1 Human Resources: Workforce Plan 2022-2025

For the purposes of clarity, the minutes will continue to align with the agenda.

## **7. Presentation: Human Resources – Workforce Plan 2022-2025**

The Head of Human Resources, Katy Lumsden, provided a verbal briefing on the Workforce Plan 2022-2025. The Chairperson noted his appreciation to the Executive for its work in developing the said Plan. The Chairperson advised the Head of Human Resources that the Board had also discussed human resource matters under Item 4 (see above).

The Board discussed the said Plan with the Head of Human Resources with reference to future Workforce Plans including: alignment with the NLI's Strategic Plan; succession planning in light of the staff's age profile; and pro-actively exceeding the target for the employment of people with disabilities.

**The Board noted the verbal briefing by the Head of Human Resources on the Workforce Plan 2022-2025.**

## **8. Policies**

### **8.1 Human Resources: Workforce Plan 2022-2025**

**With reference to Item 7 (above), the Board approved the Workforce Plan 2022-2025.**

### **8.2 Human Resources: Safe To Create Programme**

The Head of Human Resources outlined the relevant Board paper and welcomed the Board's suggestion on linking the NLI's existing policies and procedures with the proposed 'NLI Declaration of Understanding in relation to the Safe to Create Programme' through the insertion of explanatory text.

**The Board approved the draft 'NLI Declaration of Understanding in relation to the Safe to Create Programme'.**



## 9. Business Cases

### 9.1 Special Collections: Yeats Family Papers Cataloguing Project

The Director outlined the relevant business case on behalf of the Keeper of Special Collections, Colette O’Flaherty.

The Director addressed queries from the Board concerning the number of tenders received and the Executive’s strategic objectives for the Yeats Family Papers once the cataloguing project is complete.

**The Board provided approval for the Executive to proceed to contract with Archives Ireland for the provision of cataloguing services under Lot 1 (Metadata Creation, Quality Assurance, and Enhancement) of the Collection Management Services Framework 2022-2026, for the archiving, metadata creation, cataloguing, authority control and QA of the Yeats Family Papers for a period of 42 weeks** [REDACTED]

### 9.2 Estates: Contract Security Services

The Head of Estates, Brian O’Donnell, outlined the relevant business case and informed the Board that the Executive continues its work on the Board’s recommendation concerning the pay and conditions of contracted security staff.

The Head of Estates addressed a query from the Board concerning the timeline for the new contractor’s onsite start date.

**The Board provided approval for the Executive to proceed to contract with Synergy Security Solutions Ltd, under a framework agreement established by Office of Government Procurement (OGP) (Ref: RFT 166650-FSU061F) for Contract Security Services at NLI Kildare St buildings and NPA, for two years with options to extend the contract twice for 12 month periods on the**

same terms and conditions [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

### 9.3 Digital Collections: ICT Helpdesk Support Services

The Head of Digital Collections, Eoghan Ó Carragáin, outlined the relevant business case and responded to a query from the Board concerning ICT human resources within the NLI.

**The Board provided approval for the Executive to issue a tender for ICT Helpdesk Support Services for an initial period of 12 months, with the possibility of 2 further 12 month extensions. The Board noted that the Head of Digital Collections will, having consulted with OGP, either issue an sRFT/mini-tender under OGP Framework for External ICT Technical Support (IPS013F), or issue an OJEU Open Competition tender, for the procurement of the ICT Helpdesk Support Services.**

Note: The Board addressed agenda item 9.5 now with the Head of Digital Collections; however, for the purposes of clarity, the minutes will continue to align with the agenda.

### 9.4 Finance: Specialist Procurement Consultancy Service

The Head of Finance-CRO, Kathleen Ruane, outlined the relevant business case.

**The Board provided approval for the Executive to proceed to contract with Keystone Procurement Ltd. for Specialist Procurement Consultancy Service, under Category 1 of the OGP Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) for the provision of Procurement Consultancy Services to Public Sector Bodies in Ireland (PAS120F) eTenders ID: 206203, for a term of 2 years with an option for 2 extensions of up to 12 months each** [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

## **9.5 Human Resources: Specialist Recruitment Contractor**

The Head of Human Resources outlined the relevant business case and addressed a query from the Board on the proposed procurement process.

**The Board provided approval for the Executive to issue a request for tenders for an HR Contractor to provide recruitment support at Executive-Officer-equivalent level for a period of 20 weeks. The Board also provided approval for the Executive to submit a paper (by email) to the Board seeking approval to award a contract, in relation to the above matter, before the Board meeting of 29 June 2023.**

## **10. Corporate Affairs**

### **10.1 Finance**

#### **10.1.1 Management Accounts for the year to 31 January 2023 and Detailed Pro Forma Budget 2023**

The Head of Finance-CRO outlined the relevant Board paper. The Head of Finance-CRO addressed queries from the Board concerning the closing balance forecasted for year end and the rationale for same; and variance between the Management Accounts for the year to 31 January 2023 and the Financial Statements 2022 for the year ended 31 December 2022 – Draft 1.

**The Board noted that the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting of 12 April 2023, recommended the Management Accounts for the year to 31 January 2023 and the Detailed Pro Forma Budget 2023 to the Board for approval.**

**The Board approved Management Accounts for the year to 31 January 2023 and the Detailed Pro Forma Budget 2023.**

### **10.1.2 Financial Statements 2022 and Actuarial Report 2022**

The Head of Finance-CRO outlined the relevant Board paper.

**The Board noted the Financial Statements 2022 for the year ended 31 December 2022 – Draft 2.**

**The Board noted the draft Actuarial Report-FRS102 Disclosures for the year ended 31 December 2022.**

## **10.2 Risk Management**

### **10.2.1 Risk Assurance re Risk No 1.3 – Corporate Risk Register**

The Head of Digital Collections outlined the relevant Board paper.

**The Board noted the Management Assurance from the Head of Digital Collections regarding Risk No 1.3 of the Corporate Risk Register.**

## **11. External evaluation of the Board and its Committees**

The Director informed the Board that the Board Secretary is continuing her work on a draft action plan in relation to the recommendations noted in the final report on the external evaluation on the effectiveness of the Board and its Committees.

With reference to the said report and the Stateboards.ie campaign in preparation, to fill positions on the Board (due to 3 Board members' terms ending on 23 November 2023), the Director enquired if the Board would like to undertake a skills matrix.

The Board listed a number of desirable candidate specifications for potential members to the NLI Board. The Chairperson informed the Board that he would identify approximately 3 desirable candidate specifications for noting in the Stateboards.ie campaign and the Board would be informed accordingly.

**12. Next Board meeting: Thursday 29 June 2023, 10:00**

The Chairperson outlined the relevant Board paper. Some Board members informed the Chairperson that they were unable to attend the next Board meeting in person or only able to attend online due to professional commitments on that date.

**The Board agreed that the next Board meeting will take place on Thursday 29 June 2023 at 10am in the University of Galway followed, in the afternoon, with a presentation by the University Librarian and Deputy Librarian and a tour of the Hardiman Research Building and James Hardiman Library.**

**13. AOB**

The Director addressed a query from the Board regarding when staff resources will be in place to allow for the opening of the renovated Art Room (venue of the present Board meeting) as a reading room for visual collections.

**14. Time alone**

The Chairperson recommended that the Board not hold a private session due to the presence of external AV technical support.

**The Board did not hold a private session.**

**The Chairperson closed the meeting.**