

NRS Executive Management Board (EMB)
28 March 2023, 9.30 – 12.00
Held via MS Teams

Present:

Janet Egdell	Interim Chief Executive (Chair)
Anne Slater	Director of Operations and Customer Service and Deputy RG
Linda Sinclair	Director of Corporate Services and Accountable Officer
Laura Mitchell	Director of Information & Records Services and Deputy Keeper
Laura Lucas	Director of IT Services
Alan Ferrier	Director of Statistics
Jon Wroth-Smith	Director of Census Statistics (Item 6)
Claire Gillespie	Chief Finance Officer
Jay Pearce	Head of People and Talent (Item 5)
Lesley Smillie	Census Governance Lead (Item 6)
Simon Hazlewood	Head of Census PMO (Item 6)
Shirley Cameron	NRS Head of Business Management (secretariat)
Graham Thomson	Business Support Officer (secretariat)

Apologies:

Carla McHendry Delivery Director

1. Welcome, Introductions and apologies – Janet Egdell,
 - 1.1 Janet Egdell welcomed everyone to the meeting, in her first meeting as Chair. Jon Wroth-Smith and Alan Ferrier were welcomed to the meeting for the time. Apologies were listed as above, and no new declarations of interest were recorded.
2. Minutes and Actions – Janet Egdell
 - 2.1 The minutes from the meeting held on 09 February 2023 were approved and would be published on the NRS website.
 - 2.2 A review of actions was undertaken. The action tracker would be updated accordingly.
 - 2.3 There were no new decisions in correspondence since the previous EMB meeting.
3. NRS Strategy Development – Update - Linda Sinclair
 - 3.1 Linda Sinclair provided an update on strategy development. The Strategic Board had considered the strategy approach and portfolio of projects, with Non-Executive Directors (NXD) providing feedback. There had been strong support from the Board and NXDs had asked about communication plans for staff and stakeholders. These would be developed and shared with EMB members. A commitment to update the trade unions via the Partnership Board in the near future was also noted.

3.2 Next steps would involve the development of staff engagement and feedback approaches, including potential 'Ask EMB' staff sessions.

3.3 The Delivery Directorate continued to work on lesson's learned from the Census 2022 programme and changes to Digital and Strategy Board (DSB) governance were also being considered. Any changes to DSB governance would require EMB approval.

3.4 A Capital Strategy and how this would be taken forward had also been discussed at Strategic Board.

EMB Decision EMB-D176: Strategy - endorsement by NRS Strategic Board noted with next steps to develop staff engagement approaches and portfolio detail agreed.

4. Risk – Archive Environment – Laura Mitchell

4.1 Laura Mitchell provided an update on the corporate risk relating to the NRS archive environment noting, storage space limitations, environmental management, and impact on the NRS statutory record keeping obligations.

4.2 External expert advice had recently been sought to provide analysis of store room environments and advice on record processing, handling and treatment requirements. The report was due to be received late March/early April 2023, however early findings had already been received and acted on.

4.3 Laura noted the storage provided by NRS to other public bodies is funded by NRS with no extra support and reiterated the storage space limitations currently. The report had outlined a number of projects which could be initiated to mitigate risk. Janet Egdell suggested including a workstream relating to Public Sector Storage.

4.4 EMB noted their support for the development of project initiation documents (PID) and planning relating to the projects with no approval or commitment to further expenditure currently. The Digital and Strategy Board would consider the PID(s) initially, and thereafter to EMB for consideration.

Action EMB 346: Laura Mitchell to develop PID for DSB and thereafter to EMB. Action Owner: Laura Mitchell

4.5 A review of the corporate risk register as a whole by EMB was suggested, with time at a future EMB to be built in for further discussion.

Action EMB 347: Corporate Risk Register to be circulated to EMB members for review. Action Owner: Linda Sinclair

Action EMB 348: Corporate Risk Register – future agenda item to be planned in conjunction with NRS Corporate Risk Manager. Action: BMU

5. EDI – EDI Assurance Group Update – Jay Pearce

5.1 Jay Pearce provided an update on the EDI Assurance Group, which was created in April 2022, and covered the following key points:

- The group had overseen the refresh of the NRS organisational equality outcomes.
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) had agreed actions following the publication of the Equality Mainstreaming Duty Report in February 2022.
- Approaches used for gathering evidence across NRS were outlined and included staff engagement.
- A quarterly update and a summary of the staff engagement results had previously been presented to EMB.
- The Equality Mainstreaming Duty Report was due for publication on the NRS website by the end of April 2023 and would detail the progress NRS had made in mainstreaming equality.
- Next steps would see the development of an action plan aiming to achieve Equality Outcomes covering 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 financial years.
- During the last quarter, the group had also reviewed and commented on the proposed policy and guidance for undertaking integrated equality-related impact assessments (Equality, Fairer Scotland Duty and Island Communities Duty impact assessments) within NRS.
- Training and support requirements to ensure the consistent and appropriate use of integrated equality-related impact assessments across NRS was being identified.

5.2 The process to approve equality impact assessments was discussed and it was noted that NRS Director sign-off would be required.

5.3 The paper was noted by the Board.

6. Census 2022 – update – Lesley Smillie, Jon Wroth-Smith, Simon Hazlewood

6.1 Jon Wroth-Smith provided an update on the current status for delivery of first outputs. Although challenges were noted, delivery confidence remained high as plans were in place to meet the proposed timetable. Two key priority areas were noted as:

- quality of the first release, and
- delivery of the first release.

6.2 Jon also provided an update on the Office of Statistics Regulation (OSR) review which would be fundamental to the achievement of Scotland's census data as a national statistic. Publication of the OSR review recommendations and action taken by NRS to mitigate these would aid transparency ahead of first release.

6.3 Simon Hazlewood provided an update on legacy benefits and discussed Census Capability. Census capability was a collective term for the retained knowledge and experience gained across multiple disciplines, the systems and

solutions available for re-use, the processes and controls that supported delivery, and the relationships both internal and external that were formed. EMB supported the continuation of this work and a Director level workshop would be set up.

6.4 Lesley Smillie gave an update on the future of Census. Early work across a number of areas had begun in relation to discovery. Positive discussions with the Scottish Government had taken place. A governance structure was being discussed on how to make future of Census its own unique workstream. Funding considerations were discussed and a business case would be submitted to the Scottish Government in summer 2023 to ensure discovery work can progress.

6.5 Laura Lucas asked about the future of EMB Census meetings. Linda Sinclair confirmed that this can be reviewed but would remain in their current form until we have delivered first outputs.

7. Business Area Updates – Directors

7.1 Linda Sinclair asked EMB to note that a paper was being worked on relating to Fire Plans, this would be shared via correspondence.

7.2 Laura Lucas provided an update on on-going work related to lift telephony to mitigate risks.

8. NRS Finance - 23/24 Budget Commissioning Exercise : Outcomes and Recommendations - Claire Gillespie

8.1 Claire Gillespie provided a Finance update and highlighted the following:

- As part of the annual Scottish Government budget process NRS was allocated funding in line with the Census Programme requirements (£3.1m) and a resource uplift of £500k (to £23.2m). An additional £1m capital (£4m) was allocated on top of the previous NRS allocation from within the portfolio to support ambitious strategic capital investment plans.
- The Scottish Government was required to set a balanced budget each year. NRS as an NMD and listed on the [Scottish Budget 2023-2024](#) was also required to start the financial year with a balanced budget.
- Following the Ministerial statement of 15 December 2022 on the Scottish Budget, and budget scrutiny in January 2023, NRS Finance commenced the annual budget commissioning exercise.

8.2 Claire Gillespie thanked everyone for their input into the paper. The paper was taken as read. Each Business Area lead provided a deep dive into their own business area and covered risks involved in managing with this challenging level of budget.

8.3 EMB agreed the budget approach for Claire Gillespie to provide the provisional profile to the Scottish Government, with input from EMB.

Decision EMB-D177: EMB agreed that DPS4 had been budgeted for.

Decision EMB-D178: EMB agreed the proposed budget profile for 2023-2024 and agreed further review in-year would be required to achieve a balanced outturn at year end (March 2024).

9. NRS Security – Laura Lucas, Laura Mitchell, Linda Sinclair

9.1 No new updates were noted. This item would be picked up at the next meeting.

10. For Noting: NRS Governance. NRS Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) – 28 February 2023, SB 23 March 2023 – Linda Sinclair

10.1 ARC members had discussed risk deep dives and the culture of risk management within NRS and had suggested a review of aspirational risk scores. ARC members had asked for the top 10 corporate risks to be presented at each meeting and be used to shape discussions at the meeting.

11. AOB

11.1 There was no further business discussed.

12. Date of Next Meeting – 11 May 2023

End