

**NRS Executive Management Board (EMB)
9 September 2021
Held via MS Teams**

Present:

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Paul Lowe	Chief Executive (Chair)
Linda Sinclair	Director of Corporate Services and Accountable Officer
Anne Slater	Deputy SRO Census Programme and NRS Director Operations
Laura Lucas	Director of IT Services
Laura Mitchell	Director of Information & Records Services and Deputy Keeper
Claire Gillespie	Chief Finance Officer
Shirley Cameron	NRS Head of Business Management (secretariat)

Apologies:

Pete Whitehouse	Director of Statistical Services
Carla McHendry	Delivery Director

1. Welcome, Introductions and apologies – Paul Lowe

1.1 Paul Lowe welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were noted as listed. No new declarations of interest were recorded.

2. Minutes and Actions – Paul Lowe

2.1 The minutes from the meeting held on 1 July 2021 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. EMB members noted that the following decisions had been made in correspondence:

- EMB D130-D132, D134-D141. Policy and principles approved by EMB for Digital Economy Act application
- EMB D133 – Risk 25 Information
- EMB D142 – People Survey 2021 NRS local questions

2.3 EMB noted that an audit relating to the application NRS had made for Digital Economy Act accreditation had been held on 8 September 2021. The outcome of the audit would be available in due course. EMB noted thanks to all NRS colleagues who had been involved with the audit, both in preparation and in attendance on the day.

3. Scottish Covid-19 Public Enquiry- Paul Lowe and Covid-19 Record Retention - Laura Mitchell

3.1 Paul Lowe noted that the First Minister had set out a commitment to a Scottish public inquiry in response to the pandemic in the Priorities of Government statement. The scope and precise timings had not been announced. In order to consider NRS approach and any requirements to input to the enquiry, EMB agreed to a standing agenda item for future meetings.

3.2 Laura Mitchel presented an overview of the likely impact to NRS which covered the following topics:

- NRS Records Management
- Historical record of public sector response to Covid
- NRS and Scottish Government
- Legislation

3.3 NRS Directors were invited to consider implications or activity required in business areas. An item would be included on the agenda at the next EMB meeting for initial thoughts to be discussed.

Action EMB 281: Scottish Covid-19 Public Enquiry – NRS Directors to consider implications or activity required in business areas. Owner: All

Action EMB 282: Scottish Covid-19 Public Enquiry – Standing agenda item to be added to EMB business plan. Owner: Secretariat.

4. NRS Risk Deep dive Corporate Risk Register: Managing Change – Linda Sinclair

4.1 Linda Sinclair presented the deep dive into the four corporate risks identified as relating to managing change. An overview of each risk was provided and the mitigating actions identified were reported.

4.2 EMB noted the scoring for each risk and discussed where scoring differences may be applied.

5. Scotland's Census 2022 – update – Paul Lowe

5.1 Paul Lowe reported that the programme continued to focus on delivery of the plan to March 2022. The Census programme Board was continuing to scrutinise activity and had noted activity and collaboration across the programme. Other activity had included continued assurance of resource and budget requirements.

6. Business area updates

6.1 Oral updates were provided by each Director. Key themes reported were:

Operations and Customer Services – Anne Slater

6.2 Planning activity relating to NRS on-site services was continuing, following the limited re-opening of search rooms. There had been positive interest from users and a process to meet users' record access requirements had been established.

6.3 The project to transcribe and publish the 1921 census results was progressing

Director for Information & Records Services (IRS) – Laura Mitchell

6.4 The Digital Economy Act (DEA) accreditation application had been subjected to audit as noted previously. Accreditation would be in process, should the current application be

successful. C1 resource to strengthen the Information Governance team had been appointed and was due to start in early October.

6.5 Activity to progress the planned independent archive accreditation application was underway. Engagement with the governing body to agree submission date and audit were ongoing.

6.6 Other activity included the commencement of a medium-term storage project board, Declaration of Arbroath exhibition activity and activity relating to a private collection enquiry .

Director for IT Services - Laura Lucas

6.7 The Census programme continued to be a large focus of IT resource and time. Other activities included supporting the restart of services impacted by COVID-19 pandemic, activity to decommission obsolete equipment with a resulting reduction in costs, and development of a refreshed IT disaster recovery plan.

6.8 Security continued to be a focus for IT Services. Laura Lucas had been asked to join the Scottish Government's digital programme board.

Corporate Services Directorate - Linda Sinclair

6.9 Activity to support the delivery of Census 2022 in relation to procurement, commercial management and financial management was on-going.

6.10 Following the strategy session at EMB in July, an engagement timeline was being developed and would be presented to EMB with a package of proposals at the next EMB meeting.

6.11 The annual SG internal audit plan was progressing. A health and safety audit draft report had been received and would be considered. As the audit plan had some capacity, Directors were asked to consider if their business area might have a process or improvement work which might benefit from an assurance audit.

Action EMB 283: SG Internal Audit annual assurance plan – Directors to consider if their business area might have a process or improvement work suitable an assurance audit and advise Linda Sinclair. Owner – NRS Directors

6.12 Covid-19 continued to be a priority, with the Covid Secure Working Group considering service restart priorities in line with Scottish Government protection level guidance, with approvals managed through the Incident Management Team. Input from NRS HR, Health and Safety, Estates and business representation continued. Phased return planning had also started with business areas, to help inform the roadmap for future working.

6.13 NRS governance activity had continued with recent focus on preparations for the NRS Audit and Risk Committee (ARC). Linda thanked all colleagues across NRS for their assistance in preparing papers for the ARC, including the NRS Annual Report and Accounts 2020-2021.

7. NRS Finance Report – Claire Gillespie

7.1 Claire Gillespie introduced the report, which provided an update on the NRS budget position for 2021-2022 to end of period 4 (July 2021).

7.2 Key points highlighted included:

- A year to date overspend position was noted. Activity was underway to understand the impact on the forecast outturn.
- Capital expenditure was currently reporting a forecast underspend. Activity had been initiated by the Digital and Strategy Board to review additional capital works which could be prioritised and concluded in year.
- Pressures remained within the Census programme and further work to scrutinise budget assumptions was ongoing.

8. NRS Security- Laura Mitchell/Laura Lucas/Linda Sinclair

8.1 An update on Information, IT and Physical security activity was provided.

9. Procurement approval decisions for EMB - only if required-Linda Sinclair

9.1 No business was noted.

10. For Noting – NRS Governance Linda Sinclair

10.1 The draft agenda for the NRS Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) on 16 September 2021 was noted. Agenda items included the review and sign-off of the NRS Annual Report and Accounts 2020-2021. Linda Sinclair thanked all directors for their contributions to papers.

10.2 A Strategic Board had been held on 24 August.

11. Date of Next Meeting – 11 November 2021

End