

NRS Executive Management Board
22 January 2019
Room 1/G/9
Ladywell House, Edinburgh

Present:

Paul Lowe	Chief Executive (Chair)
Laura Mitchell	Director of Information & Records Services and Deputy Keeper
Amy Wilson	Director of Statistical & Registration Services
Linda Sinclair	Director of Strategy & Business Services & Accountable Officer
Sam Bedford	Director of IT Services (items 1-5)
Steven Hanlon	NRS, Chief Financial Officer
Claudette Jones	Chief IT Operations Officer
Esther Roughsedge	Statistical Promotion & Analysis (item 6)
Shirley Cameron	NRS Governance Administration (secretariat)

Apologies:

Anne Slater	Director of Operations & Customer Services
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1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Paul Lowe (PL) welcomed Claudette Jones to the meeting to provide an update under item 7, Common Operating Platform Project.

1.2 Apologies were received from Anne Slater.

2. Minutes and Actions

2.1 Minutes of 18 December 2018 were accepted as an accurate reflection of discussion.

2.2 It was agreed that the following actions could be closed. EMB9c, EMB9d, EMB79, EMB86, EMB131, EMB133, EMB135, EMB136, EMB137, EMB139, EMB140, EMB141, EMB142, EMB143, EMB144, EMB145, EMB146, EMB147.

The EMB action tracker would be updated accordingly.

3. Overview from the Chair

3.1 PL reflected on his first month in post. Early priorities and focus had been on the 2021 Census Programme, as well as on Finance and Estates and these would continue.

3.2 Other priorities included reviewing corporate capacity to achieve plans and looking at ways of bringing the organisation together to work cohesively across business areas.

3.3 There was a discussion in relation to Brexit. It was noted that a number of scenarios remained possible and that there would continue to be uncertainty for some time to come. PL stated that it was important that the organisation continued to support members of staff who might particularly be impacted by Brexit, including EU nationals. NRS Directors were encouraged to identify staff in their line management chains who may have concerns regarding uncertainty on EU national working in Scotland and that these colleagues be made aware of the support networks and opportunities available to them. A Connect article from Paul Lowe on 18 January also highlighted these opportunities for support to staff.

4. Finance

4.1 2018-19 Budget Position

4.1.1 Steven Hanlon (SH) presented the budget position as at the end of month 9 (December) 2018/19. The figures reported an agreed budget transfer figure to SG of £0.75m revenue and £0.20m capital funding.

4.1.2 Potential changes to the end of year forecast were still emerging from the Census programme and this would be reported at the next opportunity once findings were evaluated.

4.1.3 Directors were asked to engage directly with SH to highlight any additional pressures or savings which would impact on the end of year position.

4.1.4 The paper identified two funding requests which would impact on the 2018/19 budget. These were discussed and approved as follows:

- Information and Records Services request for £10k to procure legal advice around GDPR compliance.
- Operational and Customer Services request for £20k to support work to drive improvements to Connect, inform future staff engagement activity and highlight areas for improvement.

Decision: EMB-D74: EMB approved funding expenditure as follows:

- Information and Records Services request for £10k to procure legal advice around GDPR compliance.
- Operational and Customer Services request for £20k to support work to drive improvements to Connect, inform future staff engagement activity and highlight areas for improvement.

4.1.5 The recommendation to accept the proposed SBR budget was discussed and agreed.

Decision: EMB-D75: EMB approved the proposed SBR budget as detailed in 2018-19 budget position paper.

4.2 2019-20 Budget Position

4.2.1 The Board considered the budget allocation for 2019/10 financial year. As the Budget Bill had not yet been approved by the Scottish Parliament, it was noted that the figures were provisional and may be subject to change.

4.2.2 The Board noted that separate discussions regarding the funding for the Census programme were not reflected in the provisional budget.

4.2.3 Fiscal Resource (revenue budget): It was currently anticipated that 19/20 allocation would be similar to the previous year. Directors were engaging with Finance on requests for business areas and a process would be put in place to manage this ensuring a balanced budget was achieved. There was a discussion about the Target Operating Model and sustainability and it was agreed that Directors would revisit these assumptions for their own areas.

4.2.4 Capital budget: It was anticipated that there would be a number of potential requirements. It would be important to prioritise all activities across NRS to allocate resources effectively.

4.2.5 The Finance Team would coordinate the budgeting process to develop a deliverable budget.

Action: EMB 148: To advise NRS Finance of areas where savings could be achieved from Business Area spending plans relating to 2019/20 budget. Together with initial indications of capital requirements for 19/20. By close on 5 February.
Owner: All

4.2.6 The Board also discussed tolerances of delegated authority to commit expenditure in future years in advance of a budget being approved. It was agreed that a threshold of £250k would be implemented with spend above this threshold requiring EMB approval.

Decision: EMB-D76:

- For procurements below £250,000, Directors are delegated to approve the commissioning of a procurement (incl retenders) and commit the spend for 19/20 (and/or beyond) within the known outline budget allocation. This delegation applies only to commitment necessary in order to ensure continuity of on-going and business-as-usual activities across the financial year end.
- For procurement of £250,000 and above, EMB authority is required to commission a procurement (incl retenders) and commit the spend for 19/20 (and/or beyond). An appropriate business case outlining the requirements should be submitted to the monthly EMB meeting for consideration. It was agreed that urgent procurement requirements could be considered by EMB in correspondence where timescales required rapid decision making.

4.2.7 The Board then considered current procurement activities which would exceed the £250k budget tolerance and where a delay could increase risk to NRS operation or buildings. LS advised the Board of necessary repair work in relation to West Register House. SB advised the Board of a contract required to support the NRScotland environment. These were approved

Decision: EMB-D77: EMB approved the continuation of procurement as described.

5. NRS People Update: NRS HR Report

5.1 Linda Sinclair (LS) presented the HR report to EMB. LS advised that she was seeking views on the usefulness of the format and the data presented.

5.2 The Board commended the paper and asked that the report form the basis of a regular report to EMB, on a quarterly frequency. Sam Bedford (SB) suggested that the report could be further supplemented by information about training activity. PL suggested that information on wider corporate people issues including corporate volunteering would also be useful.

5.3 Actions resulting from discussion were as follows

Action: EMB 149: HR report to be added to the forward look of EMB on a quarterly basis. Owner: Secretariat.

Action: EMB 150: HR report content as presented to be retained and enhanced with the addition of training and development data and information around Business Areas' engagement and volunteering in the community. Owner: Linda Sinclair

6. People Survey 2018- Statistical Analysis of Results - Presentation

6.1 PL welcomed Esther Roughsedge(ER) to the meeting.

6.2 ER had completed an analysis of the People Survey 2018 results for NRS. The Board welcomed the presentation and opportunity to reflect on the findings and consider the activity required to address issues.

6.3 Further discussion would be timetabled for the EMB meeting on 19 February 2019 where the Board would discuss further and the work that would be taken forward corporately and within business areas in light of the results.

Action: EMB 151: Presentation slides to be shared with all EMB members for consideration ahead of the next EMB on 19 Feb 2019. Owner : Secretariat.

7. Common Operating Platform Project Update

7.1 Claudette Jones (CL) provided an update on progress in relation to the planned migration of NRS services to the Common Operating Platform.

7.2 NASnet migration activity which had proceeded over the weekend of 18/19 January had been rolled back as intermittent performance issues had occurred. Work was underway to identify the issues and re-plan the migration.

7.3 The Board discussed the work and the process of communications with key EMB members during deployment phases.

8. Census Update

8.1 Amy Wilson (AW) provided an update on the current programme activity relating to Census 2021.

8.2 With a rehearsal planned for October 2019, System Integration Testing (SIT) was timetabled for March 2019 with User Acceptance Testing following in May 2019. Progress continued with suppliers to address timeline issues.

8.3 The programme budget for 2019/20 and beyond was subject to separate discussions with Scottish Government Ministers.

8.4 The Gateway Health Check report had been received. A Senior Management Team workshop was to be held shortly and resource had been identified to facilitate discussion.

8.5 The Programme was shortly to undergo a Digital First assurance review.

8.6 The Board agreed that the Census, as NRS biggest and highest profile programme, required support across the organisation. It was recognised that more could be done to build a shared understanding of the Census across NRS, developing a supporting ethos and shared pride to achieve a successful Census in 2021 for NRS and Scotland.

9. Estates update

9.1 Linda Sinclair (LS) provided an update on current works being planned or carried out to NRS buildings as follows:

- West Register House stone work. Expenditure on the contract would fall mainly into 2019/20 financial year.
- Thomas Thomson House: Issues with the building were being evaluated and proposals would be presented to a future EMB.
- Adam Dome: Steps were being put in place to manage the required works and necessary closure. Public access was being re-routed to minimise disruption.
- Space planning in LWH and across the building estate would be taken forward in a prioritised basis a meeting with the Chief Executive was scheduled to discuss this.
- Procurement activity for facilities management support contract.

10. Customer & Operations Board Update

10.1 Anne Slater had tendered apologies it was agreed that this item would be dealt with at the next meeting. It was noted that the next meeting of COB was planned for 31 January 2018.

11. Risk Management

11.1 Linda Sinclair (LS) presented the paper which reported risk scores 16+ for review. The paper now included key Census risks. LS asked for approval around delegation of risk management to the Customer and Operations Board (COB) and the Digital Strategy Board (DSB).

11.2 EMB Directors were invited to review the paper off-line and provide comment to LS.

11.3 The Board welcomed the addition of the Census risks.

11.4 Updates and escalation from the Census Programme, as well as COB and DSB would be identified for future reports.

Action: EMB 152: To review the corporate risk paper and provide comments to LS on the action requested. Owner: All

12. Publication of EMB Minutes

12.1 EMB agreed that the minutes of the meeting should be made available to staff and also published on the NRS Website. It was agreed that publication would take place once the minutes had been formally approved.

12.2 Minutes of 18 December 2018 would now be published on the Governance page of the NRS Website and a Connect article for staff would be drafted. It was agreed that NRS Non-Executive Directors would also be provided with notification of the publication.

Decision: EMB-D79: EMB minutes to be published on the NRS Website following formal EMB approval with all NRS staff and Non-Executive Directors advised of publication.

13. Governance: Strategic Board 31 January 2019 Preparation

13.1 The standard Governance report presented to the NRS Audit and Risk Committee would now also be shared with the Executive Management Board and the NRS Strategic Board going forward.

13.2 Sequencing of meetings would be looked at to ensure appropriate cadence to achieve NRS business and to add value by greater inclusion of the NRS Non-Executive Director knowledge and experience.

13.3 EMB was currently timetabled for once a month. This may be subject to review, depending on the volume of business the Board would be required to consider.

14. Draft Forward look for EMB 2019-20

14.1 All Directors were invited to provide comment on the planned activity and timetabling.

Action: EMB 153: Directors to provide comment on EMB draft forward look to Secretariat. Owner: All

15. Any Other Business

15.1 The next meeting was planned for 19 February 2019.