

NRS Executive Management Board (EMB)
21 November 2019
Room 1/G/8
Ladywell House, Edinburgh

Present:

Paul Lowe	Chief Executive (Chair)
Laura Lucas	Interim Director of IT Services
Laura Mitchell	Director of Information & Records Services and Deputy Keeper
Linda Sinclair	Director of Corporate Services & Accountable Officer
Anne Slater	Director of Operations & Customer Services
Pete Whitehouse	Director of Statistical Services,
Steven Hanlon	Chief Financial Officer
Stephen Bourne	Scotland's Census 2021 Programme Director (Item 3 & 4)
Shirley Cameron	NRS Business Manager (secretariat)

1. Welcome and Introductions

1.1 Paul Lowe welcomed Stephen Bourne to his first meeting. No apologies were noted.

2. Minutes and Actions

2.1 Minutes of 17 October 2019 were accepted. These would now be published on the NRS website and publicised on Connect.

2.2 Updates for the following actions were noted:

EMB 183: Census Programme Independent Information Assurance Review:
It was discussed that due to census tripartite working across UK census taking authorities, Pete Whitehouse would be best placed to lead on this action and would advise the secretariat on timescales for future discussion at EMB. Action ongoing

EMB 185: The Public Sector Equality Duty report: A requirement to update this report bi-annually was understood and would be taken forward to report at the EMB on 6 February 2020. Action on-going.

EMB 190: Corporate Calendar: To be developed by 31 Jan 2020. Action On-going.

2.3 All other actions were noted as completed. The EMB action tracker would be updated accordingly.

3. Census 2021 Programme update

Follow-up to Programme Board – 19 November 2019

3.1 The Census 2021 Programme Board (CPB) was held on 17 November 2019. A draft summary paper describing the outcomes, key points and actions was provided for EMB as a basis for discussion.

3.2 Stephen Bourne (SB) was attending EMB for the first time and provided an overview of the current status of activity being undertaken to review the programme set up, planning position and management approaches.

3.3 SB drew the Board's attention to a point raised at CPB in relation to the Technology Assurance Framework (TAF) review action planning and indicated this should be available to Directors for consideration and would circulate documentation. The Board also discussed the planning of a Digital First assessment and agreed the requirements and timeline would require further consideration.

3.4 The Board discussed the on-going activity to evaluate the outcomes of the recent rehearsal, alongside the opportunities the programme team would have to learn from the evaluation from the data gathered as well as the operational and technical approaches used.

3.5 Linda Sinclair explained the steps taken to strengthen and revise the Project Management Office, with external resource procured to review and propose next steps to drive improvements. As part of SB's programme review he asked the Board for permission to close the current programme risk register to enable a revision to develop thematic risks and mapping to be undertaken. The change would see risk management tying in directly with operational activity. The closed register would be retained for audit purposes. SB would also engage with each NRS Director to discuss accountability, review dependencies and understand risk position.

3.6 Linda Sinclair reported that a new SG Finance partner would be appointed to CPB. In the interim, the SG Finance Deputy director would attend. EMB heard that budget pressures were predicted to continue for 2020-2021 financial year with discussions around the Spending Review and budget still to be settled. The expectation that savings would be applied where possible continued, with engagement with Ministers required to inform budget requirements and the accountability NRS has to the UK Statistical Authority to deliver Scottish census data as part of the UK overall data. The Board discussed potential opportunities for savings, particularly relating to the field force model, including exploring opportunities to resell or lease equipment.

4. NRS Finance

4.1 Steven Hanlon presented the finance update, reporting the position to the end of period 7 2019-2020 (October 2019). It was noted that the revenue budget was reporting an underspend of £0.4m. Risk and uncertainties across the Census 2021 Programme were continuing to be monitored.

4.2 Following discussion at EMB in October, the Digital and Strategy Board would consider project's identified for capital budget expenditure. NRS Directors, with NRS Finance would manage and identify other potential expenditure opportunities ahead of the Spring Budget Review.

4.3 An early proposal for the budget for financial year 2020-2021 was being prepared and would be reported at the next EMB meeting in December.

4.4 The NRS Finance team had set up VAT training for budget holders, budget managers and other interested colleagues.

4.5 The Board also noted the summary of risk associated with the forecast position.

5. NRS File plan/ERDM approach - update

5.1 Laura Mitchell reported that following a meeting with SG Knowledge & Information Management, a further option had been identified which would enable NRS to maintain the Keeper 's requirement to protect the NRS record while retaining the use of the SG erdm solution. The Board agreed on circulating the updated options paper by correspondence, to give EMB members the opportunity to consider all the options once more, and if appropriate, record their support for exploring this new option further with SG.

Action EMB 198: NRS File Plan/ERDM approach – to circulate (via BMU) the updated options paper for comments and support for exploring new option further. Owner: Laura Mitchell

6. Security

6.1 Laura Lucas informed the Board of training opportunities provided for governance boards by the National Cyber Security Centre. The Board agreed this would be of interest with timing to be agreed.

6.2 Linda Sinclair updated the Board on recruitment activity to strengthen physical security resource.

6.3 LS explained that the establishment of a Security Board was being considered. An update would be provided to EMB.

7. Corporate Risk Management: 16+ Update

7.1 Paul Lowe indicated the new format since September had been helpful.

7.2 Linda Sinclair introduced the paper and advised that EMB members had engaged with the NRS risk manager to review of corporate risk and mitigating actions to establish improvement opportunities or gaps.

- 7.3 The Board then reviewed risk, with main points discussed as follows:
- NRS 1 – Managing Change/Threat – An EMB planning session on 11 December 2019 would consider the NRS strategic direction. A Delivery Director had also been recruited and was due to start with NRS in early January 2020.
 - NRS 2 – workforce planning strategy –further resource would be considered to drive action.
 - NRS 3 – Estates and Environment /Threat – Ongoing works identified across most of the estate and in progress. Health and Safety steering group had been established with an update to come to EMB at the next meeting.
 - NRS 7- Information – Opportunities to improve customer base and offering would be considered.
 - NRS 9 – Funding – The current single year budget settlement restricts planning and decision making and may restrict strategic decision making opportunities if continues.
 - NRS 10 – Commercial/Threat – additional resources in place – currently time to bed in and unknown threats. Census end-to-end plan , milestones too.
 - NRS 18 – Reputational/Threat – Paul Lowe would take ownership and consider in conjunction with Linda Sinclair.

7.4 The Board welcomed the opportunity to consider risks and asked Linda Sinclair to consider if there may be an opportunity to review thematic risk as a deep dive on a quarterly basis.

Actions arising from discussion:

Action EMB 199: Corporate Risk – to consider thematic risk reporting at EMB on a quarterly basis. Action owner: Linda Sinclair.

Action EMB 200: Corporate Risk NRS 18 – To review reputational risk threat scoring and mitigations identified, as owner of the risk. Action owner: Paul Lowe.

8. People Survey 2019

8.1 Linda Sinclair provided an update on the survey which had completed. A breakdown of the findings of the report would be made available to EMB when available with an opportunity to discuss the scores at the EMB meeting in December.

8.2 A donation would be made to the Civil Service Charity for every response completed.

9. Governance

- Strategic Board – was planned to be held on 30 January 2020 with EMB looking at the planned items in more detail at the December meeting. Topics were likely to include, archive strategy, digital and physical; NHSCR; People Survey and Staff Engagement Network.
- Digital & Strategy Board – had met on 13 November. Activity following on from decisions made at EMB on 21 October were discussed and would drive a

pipeline of activity over the coming months. EMB approval would be required for Projects exceeding DSB tolerance and these would be escalated.

- Customer and Operations Board – was being chaired by Bruno Longmore on an interim basis. The terms of reference and Key Performance Indicators had formed the main basis of the last meeting.

10. EMB Operation

10.1 Terms of reference review and decision log review – would be timetabled for a future meeting

10.2 NRS Governance Cadence to end of March 2021 was agreed as meeting every six weeks.

11. The next meeting would be on 19 December 2019.

End