

NRS STRATEGIC BOARD MEETING

24 August 2021
Held via MS Teams

Present:

Paul Lowe	Chief Executive (Chair)
Laura Mitchell	Deputy Keeper & Director of Information and Records Services
Linda Sinclair	Director of Corporate Services and Accountable Officer
Laura Lucas	Director of IT Services
Carla McHendry	Delivery Director
Claire Gillespie	Chief Finance Officer
Colin Ledlie	Non-Executive Director
Catherine McFie	Non-Executive Director
Mandy Gallacher	Non-Executive Director
Bill Matthews	Non-Executive Director
Gordon Shipley	Non-Executive Director
Andy Robertson	Census Director team (Item 5)
Shirley Cameron	Head of Business Management Unit, Secretariat

Apologies:

Anne Slater	Deputy SRO Census Programme and NRS Director Operations
Peter Whitehouse	Director of Statistical Services

1. Welcome and Introductions

- 1.1 Paul Lowe welcomed everyone to the meeting, which was held via MS Teams.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted as listed.

2. Minutes of meeting held on 11 May 2021

- 2.1 The minutes were approved and would be published on the NRS website.
- 2.2 There were no actions for discussion.
- 2.3 Declarations of Interest - no new declarations of interest were noted.

3. Corporate Overview – Linda Sinclair

- 3.1 Linda Sinclair introduced the paper. The report included updates covering:
 - Census 2022
 - Major programmes and business change.
 - Customer facing services.
 - Records and archives.
 - Finance and assurance.
 - Corporate strategy and process

- People.
- Governance
- Covid response, impact and service restart update

4. NRS Strategy – Linda Sinclair/Carla McHendry

4.1 The presentation provided the Strategic Board with an update on the progress underway by the NRS Executive Team to develop a revised NRS Strategy. Last reported to Strategic Board on 11 May 2021.

4.2 Recent activity had seen further development of the strategic approach including an outline of the plans to communicate and deliver the strategy to staff and stakeholders. An update on the development of the strategic portfolio was also provided.

4.3 Non-Executive Directors were invited to provide input and advice to the approach. In discussion the following points were raised:

- Gordon Shipley offered to share a core skill maturity model.
- Mandy Gallacher was interested in engagement with stakeholder plans.
- Development of strategic KPIs would be welcomed.

5. Census 2022 Update – Andy Robertson

5.1 The paper provided an update on the programme's progress since the last meeting of the Strategic Board. Key points were noted as:

- A programme overview provided an update on the status of the programme, which was noted as reporting Amber against the Census 2022 plan.
- Assurance activity was on-going, with a delivery TAF in November 2021.
- The operational model would continue to refine towards census day with underpinned IT systems noted as secure.
- Critical activity to mitigate a risk relating to resourcing pressures was noted.
- A report of the key programme risk themes was noted.
- It was noted that the NRS Audit and Risk Committee also reviewed the risks relating to the programme.

5.2 In discussion the following points were raised:

- Further information relating to resourcing challenges was provided, including advice that colleagues who had recently completed the collect operation in 2021 from ONS and NISRA would be joining the programme.
- Lessons continued to be learned from the 2021 census activity.
- Analysis to make recommendations about the future of census beyond 2022 and how it is delivered had commenced.

- Budget activity to deliver a highly innovate programme continued to be tracked through NRS programme governance as well at the NRS Audit and Risk Committee through risk deep dive reports.
- IT health checks were being planned internally in NRS and with census suppliers. The risk of cyber-attacks continued to be high.

6. NRS COVID-19 – update – Linda Sinclair/Carla Mchendry

6.1 The report provided an update on the NRS Covid response and ongoing management approaches. The report covered:

- Governance of activity continued through an incident management structure with gold, silver and bronze level groups was in place.
- NRS continued to follow Scottish Government advice on physical distancing and ventilation. The use of CO2 monitors was being introduced in buildings.
- A phased return road map had been developed.
- The future ways of working developing approach would align with the refreshed NRS Corporate Strategy.
- Staff engagement was ongoing and had included a future working survey to gather staff views from permanent and fixed term colleagues.
- The output from the survey and continuing plans for future phased return were progressing through the incident management governance arrangements.
- Wellbeing of staff continued to be a commitment and focus.
- Engagement with Scottish Government and other Public Bodies was continuing.

7. Audit and Risk Committee (ARC) – Colin Ledlie

7.1 Colin Ledlie provided an update from the 8 June 2021 Audit and Risk Committee meeting. Draft minutes of that meeting and the NRS Governance report were provided as part of the update. It was noted that Mandy Gallacher would be invited to attend the next Audit and Risk Committee.

7.2 Paul Lowe extended his thanks to Colin Ledlie, as ARC Chair for his on-going support and challenge.

8. AOB

8.1 Paul Lowe thanked the Board for their interest and challenge. No other business was noted.

9. Date of Next meeting

9.1 The next planned meeting of the NRS Strategic Board was noted as 25 November 2021.

End