

## **Terms of Reference for The National Archives' User Forum - draft**

### **The role of the User Forum is to:**

Represent the interests of all users of The National Archives' public services (onsite, online, and remotely)<sup>1</sup>

Act as a body to seek feedback on quality of service being provided and put forward suggestions for improvement

Provide a forum for management to communicate our strategic and business priorities, the goals we set and the work we do to meet them

Provide a forum for management to test ideas for service improvement

Advise management on measures that can be taken to improve public consultation on service delivery

Bring issues of concern or potential risk to the attention of management.

### **The role of the User Forum is distinct from:**

The role of the User Advisory Group, which provides advice, guidance and feedback on the development and delivery of public services at a strategic level. However, it is likely that there will be links and communication channels between the 2 groups, in both directions.

Executive responsibility of The National Archives' formal governance structure

Any other consultative group not listed above

### **Method of engagement**

The User Forum will be open to all interested users of our services.

Management will make a commitment to encourage both onsite and online users to attend, and to make the meeting accessible to a broad range of user types (e.g. Independent Researchers, Family Historians, Military Historians) and user demographics.

We will advertise the forums widely so as to encourage a diverse attendance. Timings of the meetings will be varied so as to maximise opportunities to attend.

### **The National Archives commits to:**

Allow all users the opportunity to have their say

Listen to, and take on board the opinions of those present

<sup>1</sup>During 2011 – 2012, we will be running a formal work stream to improve opportunities for engagement with online users

Manage and Chair the meetings effectively to promote productive communication and discussion

**In return, users will be expected to:**

Respect the right of all users to have their say

Behave courteously and thoughtfully towards other users and staff

Respect the roles of the Chair and other staff in managing and steering the meetings

**Constitution of the User Forum**

The User Forum will meet 8 times a year with:

The Director of Operations and Services (Chair)

The Head of Public Services Development

The Head of Advice and Records Knowledge

The Head of Document Services

The Quality Manager

Additional members of staff can be made available depending upon agenda topics. Where appropriate, issues raised at the User Forum can be referred for an off line meeting between the user(s) concerned and the appropriate member(s) of staff. Similarly, where appropriate, issues raised at the User Forum can be escalated to the User Advisory Group.

For the purpose of communicating Business Plans and Reports, the forum will also be attended at least once annually by the Chief Executive.

Agendas for meetings will be published in advance, and decisions and actions will be recorded and agreed following the meetings.

**Resources**

We will make limited resources available to support the User Forum:

Advertise the User Forum onsite, online and in publications where appropriate

Provide meeting space, refreshments and facilities, as required