

Title: The National Archives' User Forum

Date: 17th May 2018

Location: Talks Room

Attendees (Staff)

Tom Gregan (TG) -Head of Document Services

Lee Oliver (LO) -Head of Venue Management and Services

David Priest (DP) -Document Production Coordination Manager

Caroline Ottaway-Searle (COS) - Director of Public Engagement

Catherine Hill (CH) PA to Caroline Ottaway-Searle (notes)

1. TG welcomed all to the meeting

Due to the visit of the Foreign Secretary to Hanslope Park, the FCO talk had been postponed until the August or November meeting.

2. Matters Arising

2.1 When will the car park charging be live?

TG replied that there have been contractual issues with the company installing the software. Due to operational issues the introduction of charges for car parking have been delayed until further notice.

2.2 The late night opening (until 9pm) trial does not work for all users and it would be more useful if TNA stayed open on Wednesday and Friday until 7pm. Why not reinstate Monday opening?

TG replied that TNA had made the decision in 2010 to close on a Monday. There are costs associated to the running of the building. The current late night opening is for a trial period.

3. Open discussion

3.1 Keyboards

The new computer keyboards are marked in lower case and for those with poor eyesight it is disadvantageous. Please can we change to upper case keyboards? Also, the dimples in the home keys for touch typing are not adequate.

DP replied that the new keyboards had come as a package with the new monitors, and he would feed back the comment to the IT department. However, on the new reader screen that was launched on

14/5 there is a "Your comments" box permanently on screen, and he would encourage all to use it.

3.2 GDPR

Under new data regulations 'GDPR' will we be able to see the monitoring information on individual users?

TG replied that TNA does provide DORIS history to anyone who can prove their identity. The TNA privacy notice is being revised in line with new regulations.

3.3 Catering

It is felt that the recent price increases in the public restaurant are unwarranted, and the second, cheaper, menu choice has been removed. This impacts seriously on anyone who is at TNA for more than one day a week.

TG replied that TNA has had feedback around price increases but there had not been a price increase for three years. However, he would feed back comments about the menu to the catering company.

3.4 Contaminated records

Some MOD records were found to be contaminated by asbestos – they were copied and the originals destroyed. Would you comment?

TG replied that this was a safety decision taken by MoD where it was agreed to accession a surrogate rather than the contaminated original record. TNA has a duty of care to abide by Health and Safety regulations.

3.5 Locker room issues

There are two types of electronic locker key, and these lockers are intermingled. The instruction print is so small some readers are using the wrong instructions and inadvertently unlocking lockers. We need a large notice pointing out the difference.

LO replied that he would review the instructions and look at a large print version.

Why have the locks been removed from the coat racks?

LO replied that the keys had worn and it was discovered that they opened more than one lock. TNA has no budget to replace the racks.

You have changed the luggage policy and there appears to be no information on the website.

LO replied that there is information on the website under “What can I take into the reading rooms?” He would raise the issue with the Security team so that they can inform people that they can book in large luggage at Kew Station.

3.5 Recalled records

Could a policy be introduced whereby, if a government department recalls a record, a digital copy is made?

TG replied that TNA is already working along these lines, introduced in the last 18 months. The problem has been recognised and there is a drive within TNA to no longer send the original back to government departments.

3.6 Public address system

Why are events no longer being advertised on the public address system?

LO replied that it had been found that announcements did not significantly affect event attendance. Instead, the screen in the lobby is used for announcements. He had discounted pop up notifications on screens in an aim to reduce disruptive clutter and noise. However, he would take this comment on board, particularly if numbers at User Forum dwindle too much.

3.7 Cycling in the Pocket Park

Please would you remind people not to cycle on the path between the lakes in the Pocket Park.

LO replied that TNA does discourage bikes in the park, and this comment would be noted.

7. **Date of next meeting: Thursday 16th August. 12:30 – 13:45**