The National Archives Public Executive Team Meeting Minutes
Date of Meeting: Tuesday 03 June 2025 at 09:30
Location: Swan Room & Teams

THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Present:
Saul Nassé (SN) – CEO and Keeper– via VC
Emmajane Avery (EJA) – Director of Public Engagement and Sector Leadership
Lucy Fletcher (LF) – Director of Public Access and Government Services
Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) – Director of Research and Commercial Development, Chair
Andrea Metcalf (AM) – Director of People, Inclusion and Change
Peter Mills (PM) – Interim Finance Director

Also present:
Asha Bagayat – Head of Governance
Claire Collard – Head of Financial Planning, Performance and Analysis (for item 4, 7 and 8)
Audience Insight Officer (for item 3)
Alex Forbes – Head of Government Services, Strategy and Engagement (for item 5)
Customer Insight and Data Lead (for item 3)
Lindsay McCombie – Service Access Owner (MoD Access) (for item 4)
Head of FOI Centre (for item 6)
Helen Potter – Head of Information Rights Strategy (for item 4)
Governance Coordinator (Minutes)
Corporate Information Analyst (for item 7)
Sam Whaley – Head of Strategy and CEO's Office – via VC
Service Transformation Manager (for item 4)

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

1.1. Apologies were received from John Sheridan, Digital Director.

1.2. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes and Action Log

2.1. Subject to one minor amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 22 May were agreed as a correct record.

2.2. The Executive Team (ET) reviewed and updated the Action Log with progress made against item 5, noting that the item will come to the next meeting on 19 June for discussion.

3. End of Year Visitor Insights

The Customer Insight and Data Lead and the Audience Insight Officer joined the meeting.

3.1. EJA introduced the item.

3.2. ET received a presentation from the Audience Insight Team, which provided an overview of visitor numbers and audience insight from the last financial year across onsite visits (exhibition and reading rooms), online participation and touring exhibitions.

3.3. The presentation highlighted the stabilisation of reading room visitor numbers post-lockdown, the effect of closing the exhibition space for renovations on visitor numbers, the success of the 'pay what you can' model for online sessions, the increasing engagement with the onsite education provision

3.4. **Action:** EJA to return to ET with a deep dive on MI5 figures at a later date.

3.5. **Decision:** ET noted the presentation and agreed that the information should inform the 'Profile' workstream of the Strategy Review.

3.6. **Action:** GMR to circulate the presentation to The National Archives' Trust.

The Customer Insight and Data Lead and the Audience Insight Officer left the meeting

4. MOD Service Records: Service Transformation Project Update

CC, LM, HP and the Service Transformation Manager joined the meeting.

4.1. LF introduced the item.

4.2. ET offered their congratulations to the team for the significant increase in the compliance level.

4.3. ET discussed the publication of the 'Lessons Learned' paper. LF confirmed that it was a commitment to the ICO and would be published publicly on the organisation's website.

4.4. ET discussed the current backlog.

4.5. ET discussed the next steps, which would include resource planning for the following year.

4.6. **Decision:** ET noted the update and endorsed it to go to Board.

CC, LM, HP, the Service Transformation Manager and the Senior Management Accountant left the meeting.

5. State of Government Record Keeping and Challenges around Digital Records

AF joined the meeting.

5.1. LF introduced the item, explaining the aim of the annual information report on the state of government record keeping, which was to look at the future and what the opportunities were for the organisation raise the profile of departmental compliance and to make more of an impact in supporting government capability of managing digital records.

5.2. ET agreed that they were in support of the ambitions laid out in the paper, which included promoting advocacy and requirements. ET discussed supporting government to understand the records that they hold and how to achieve proportionate sensitivity reviews at scale.

5.3. **Decision:** ET noted the report and endorsed it to go to Board.

AF left the meeting.

6. Reclosure Policy

The Head of FOI Centre joined the meeting.

6.1. LF introduced the item, explaining the work to update the Reclosure Policy to ensure the organisation can better articulate its legal context and its framework for striking an appropriate and proportionate balance between its obligations to the data subjects in the records (in terms of sensitivity, privacy and data protection), and its access obligations to the wider public.

6.2. ET discussed the updated policy. The Head of FOI Centre confirmed that there were some further updates to come to ensure that the policy was using plain English and to separate out the Takedown Policy, but that broadly it would stand as presented.

6.3. The Head of FOI Centre confirmed that the CEO’s office would endorse the policy a final time before it is presented to the ICO.

6.4. **Decision:** ET agreed to reword the ‘Contact Us’ section of the policy to ensure equity of access.

6.5. **Decision:** ET endorsed the policy with the agreed updates.

The Head of FOI Centre left the meeting.

7. Risk Appetite Matrix

CC and the Corporate Information Analyst joined the meeting.

7.1. PM introduced the item, explaining that the Risk Appetite Matrix scores had been discussed at the most recent Audit and Risk Committee, and it had been agreed that it would be revisited at ET.

7.2. ET discussed the current Risk Appetite Matrix scores. It was agreed that there was scope to review the approach.

7.3. **Action:** PM to research matrixes from similar organisations, canvass opinions from directors outside of the meeting and return to ET with a firm proposal.

The Corporate Information Analyst left the meeting.

8. Update to March 2025 Management Accounts

8.1. PM introduced the item and talked through the minor updates to the March management accounts which were approved and would be presented to the Board.

8.2. **Decision:** ET noted the update and endorsed the accounts.

CC left the meeting.

9. AOB and Forward Agenda

Outlook Calendars

9.1. **Decision:** ET endorsed a request from IT to reinstate the practise of all Outlook calendars being open by default.

People Metrics

9.2. AM informed ET that she would be sending out People metrics later in the day, looking at turnover, sickness and turnover by department. It was noted that these metrics would be used as part of the Strategic Plan outputs.

9.3. **Decision:** ET agreed to discuss the metrics at the next Directors' Catch-Up meeting.

Annual Report Items

9.4. **Decision:** ET agreed that PM could sign off the Going Concerns, Heritage Assets and Land and Building items for the Annual Report and Accounts

10. Noting Items

10.1. ET were provided with the Corporate Reporting Schedule and an External Communications Review for noting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12:25.

The National Archives' Public Executive Team Meeting Minutes
Date of Meeting: Thursday 19 June 2025 at 10:00
Location: Swan Room and Video Conference (VC)

Present:
Saul Nassé (SN) – CEO and Keeper, Chair
Emmajane Avery (EJA) – Director of Public Engagement and Sector Leadership
Lucy Fletcher (LF) – Director of Public Access and Government Services (via VC)
Gemma Maclagan Ram (GMR) – Director of Research and Commercial Development
Peter Mills (PM) – Interim Finance Director
John Sheridan (JS) – Digital Director

Also present:
Asha Bagayat (AB) – Head of Governance
Claire Collard (CC) – Head of Financial Performance, Planning and Analysis (for items 3 and 4)
Head of Private Office (via VC)
Lee Oliver (LO) – Head of Visitor Experience (for item 6)
Governance Coordinator (minutes)
Claire Stidwell (CS) – Interim Head of Marketing (for item 5)
Sam Whaley (SW) – Head of Strategy and CEO's Office (via VC)

1. Apologies and Declarations of Interest

1.1. Apologies were received from Andrea Metcalf, Director of People, Inclusion and Change.

1.2. There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes and Action Log

2.1. Subject to minor wording amendments and a broader amendment suggested by LF to item 6.1, the Executive Team (ET) agreed the minutes of the meeting held on 03 June were a correct record.

(i) **Action:** LF and the Governance Coordinator to discuss amending item 6.1 to more accurately reflect the updates being made to the policy.

2.2. ET reviewed the Action Log. No updates were made.

3. May Management Accounts

CC joined the meeting.

3.1. CC introduced the item and talked through the accounts, which currently show a potential need to reallocate budget. CC noted that any MOD FOI or Retained EU Law projects are being monitored closely, as funds from these projects cannot be reallocated and would have to be returned to Treasury.

3.2. ET discussed actions that could be taken to ensure the most efficient use of available financial resource, including strategically planning the spend profile for this year and next. CC confirmed that the Finance team is working with directors to create a list of priorities to direct any available resource towards.

3.3. **Action:** CC to send around the final position against the next three financial years, in order to plan CDEL spend on the estate.

3.4. **Action:** CC to calculate a percentage figure for the uplift.

3.5. **Decision:** ET approved the accounts.

4. Financial and Budget Delegations

4.1. PM introduced the item.

4.2. CC talked through the item, explaining the refinements to the format and content of the draft delegation.

4.3. ET discussed the updates.

4.4. **Decision:** Regarding the update to paragraph 5 concerning the approval by the directors of Finance and PIC for reallocating budgets from non-staff to staff costs, it was agreed that PM, AM and JS would discuss the matter further outside of the meeting before the document is finalised.

4.5. **Decision:** Regarding repurposing of budgets, it was agreed that cost centres could be grouped around specific purposes, and budget holders could repurpose funds without cost limit within those groups. Any budget intended to be repurposed outside of its group would require director approval.

4.6. **Decision**: Regarding authorisation limits for income contracts, it was agreed that these would be aligned with the existing concession contracts limits, to ensure that all income is treated in the same way.

4.7. **Decision:** It was agreed that decisions made by ET on new, high-risk or contentious income streams would be sighted to the Board for information and not approval. SN noted that future updates to Board governance procedures may help regularise this process.

4.8. **Decision:** It was agreed that all Directors and Cost Managers would sign the Budget Delegations and Acceptance of Responsibilities annually, when the budgets are issued.

CC left the meeting.

5. Social Media Platform Proposals

CS joined the meeting.

5.1. EJA introduced the item.

5.2. CC talked through the item, outlining three proposed options for the organisation's ongoing social media presence and highlighting the preferred option.

5.3. ET discussed channels that other government departments are currently using as well as general guidance from central government. This included regulations regarding the use of TikTok, which were previously agreed at the 20 Feb 2025 meeting.

5.4. ET discussed the need for an audience-centric approach and how best to cover the wide range of audiences that the organisation reaches.

5.5. CS confirmed that discussions regarding social media platforms would be ongoing. LF suggested including the Data Protection Officer in future discussions.

5.6. **Decision:** ET endorsed the preferred option, whereby the organisation will maintain its main channels on Facebook, Instagram, X, YouTube, LinkedIn and Spotify. Additional accounts will be retained, created or phased out selectively based on engagement levels and value.

CS left the meeting.

6. Visitor Regulations Update

LO joined the meeting.

6.1. EJA introduced the item.

6.2. LO talked through the proposal to update the visitor regulations to prohibit unauthorised filming, audio recording and streaming inside the building, including a brief overview of the inciting incidents.

6.3. ET discussed the proposal.

6.4. **Decision:** ET agreed that, whilst there was unanimous support for empowering public-facing staff to deal with confrontational incidents, that a blanket ban on filming, audio recording and streaming was an overcorrection.

6.5. **Decision:** ET agreed to keep the signage currently in the exhibition prohibiting filming, audio recording and streaming without prior arrangement whilst alternative options were explored.

6.6. **Action:** Head of Private Office to reach out to colleagues in DCMS to see if similar discussions have been happening in other departments and organisations.

LO left the meeting.

7. AOB

Exhibition Updates

7.1. The windows in the exhibition space will be replaced after the deinstallation of the exhibition in December 2025, prior to the next planned exhibition opening in February 2026.

Strategy Update

7.2. SW informed ET that he had sent out a draft strategy document and requested that directors look at it and make any comments prior to wider distribution next week.

Honours List

7.3. ET briefly discussed the Honours List. SN asked that ET send him any requests for physical copies.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12:19.