Registers of Scotland
ros.gov.uk

MINUTE OF THE REGISTERS OF SCOTLAND BOARD MEETING
13 November 2014

Chair	Sheenagh Adams, Keeper
Board Members Present	Kenny Crawford Stephen Dingle Janet Egdell John Fanning Ben Gray Billy Harkness John King Jas Patyal Fiona Ross
In Attendance	Isla MacLeod (head of communications)
Secretariat	Julie Mitchell

"This is an edited version of the original Secretary's minute of this meeting. In terms of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002, we consider some information originally minuted to be exempt in terms of one or more of the following sections of the Act: s29 (Formulation of Scottish Administration policy etc.); s30 (Prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs); s33 (Commercial interests and the economy). In all cases where we have redacted information we have taken into consideration the public interest test and decided that the balance lies in favour of non-disclosure at this time."

Introduction, apologies and declaration of interests

1.   Sheenagh Adams welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2.   There were no current declarations of interest.

Minute of meeting of 14 May 2014 *(RoSBrd2014/11/01)*

3.   An updated minute of 27 August was circulated at the meeting and accepted as an accurate reflection of the meeting.

Action Log *(RoSBrd2014/11/02)*

4.   **Action 1434 Review of the Scope of the Quality Unit -** Billy Harkness reported that EMT had recently reviewed and agreed a proposal by legal services that Andy Crawley undertake a strategic review of policy, quality and legal advice within RoS and had agreed that the final proposal from this

review would be submitted to EMT in January 2015. The outcome would be communicated to the board in February 2015.

5. **Action 1557 Options for delivery of registration functions –** The board agreed with EMT's proposal that this should be considered as part of the digital strategy, along with actions 1568 and 1572. Now closed on the board action log.

6. **Action 1570 Report on delivery models from chief registrars' conference** - Sheenagh Adams had circulated her report – action closed.

7. **Action 1571 – Prepare staff numbers comparison for now and post-designated day.** The board agreed that this could not be completed until the digital strategy was agreed and the 2012 Act was fully implemented. An update would be provided at the February 2015 board.

Voluntary Exit
8. The board was reminded that it had agreed a budget earlier in the year for a possible voluntary exit package to be offered to RoS staff. EMT advised that this had now been agreed and would be a targeted offering.

9. John Fanning advised that a scheme agreed in this year would be accounted for in this year's accounts regardless of exit dates agreed.

10. The board noted the update.

Keeper's update
Land reform bill
11. Sheenagh commented that there were some interesting ideas arising from the policy formation for the Land Reform Bill and that a draft consultation had been submitted to Cabinet. This had moved apace and although there could be some challenges for RoS arising from this, there were also opportunities. She added that it was not for RoS to provide advice on this but to provide facts.

Data management
12. EMT had seen a presentation on a data delivery method used by Ambita. It had been interesting and would inform the scoping study that RoS would undertake to refine its own options and delivery methods.

Chief Land Registrars' conference
13. Sheenagh referred to the report she had circulated by email. She had found the conference very useful and a number of the outcomes from it had proved of value recently when preparing information on foreign land ownership for ministers.

Audit committee update

14. Stephen Dingle updated the board on the November meeting of the audit committee. The committee was content that RoS was as ready as it

could be for the designated day and highlighted the gateway report, which had been amber/green.

15.   The committee had expressed concern around compliance with the performance appraisal system.   The audit report had highlighted the significant number of staff and managers who had not submitted objectives for the current year.   The committee had accepted that the method of counting the submissions was not entirely accurate but even with a considerable margin of error, non-compliance was still significant.   He asked the board whether they thought this was a management issue or an issue with the perceived value of the process.

16.   The board was concerned that non-compliance was an issue across other RoS management processes.   They agreed that EMT should consider this and address the issue as a matter of some urgency.   The audit report and a copy of the performance review form would be circulated to the board for information.

Digital Update - *RoSBrd2014/11/03*
17.   Sheenagh welcomed Tom Meade, RoS' Digital Director, to his first board meeting.

18.   Tom thanked the board for their welcome and noted that this was indicative of his first few weeks in RoS.   He commented that he had joined a very strong Executive Management Team who had a collegiate approach.

19.   The board noted the update paper from Janet Egdell, which was supplemented by Tom's presentation.

20.   Tom presented the board with an update on the preparation of the digital business strategy.   He informed the board of ongoing and completed recruitment to pull together an intelligent client function. Priority and key posts had been filled from within the business, such as a Service Manager, which would be undertaken by Paul Singer, as this role needed someone who would engage with the business customers and prioritise and drive change.   External customer engagement would be undertaken by Mark Palmer from Commercial Services and an externally-focused user experience specialist.

21.   Tom advised that a company had been engaged to coach IT service teams to enable them to identify and cut-out waste and streamline processes. They were providing training to 36 members of staff in British Computer Society (BCS) agile practitioner and another six members of staff were undergoing intensive train the trainer training to ensure RoS was planning for the future.

22.   With regard to programme and project management, Tom explained that governance was being added to augment the project steering group (PSG).   The addition would have a digital focus and include external stakeholders.

23.   Tom noted that agile delivery had previously been attempted in RoS but that he was bringing in experienced practitioners who would appropriately manage the processes.

24.   A test manager has been identified, along with an agile lead and enterprise architect.

25.   The board noted that 16 process improvement projects had been identified, one of which was a value framework that measures the value of changes and assists in prioritisation.

People and processes

26.   Tom advised the board that the focus was on architecture, not technology and that he had recruited integration expertise. The board noted that the current systems were highly coupled and that tackling this was a priority.

Engagement

27.   Work was ongoing with EMT to agree what was needed in terms of business architecture.

28.   Tom reassured the board that engagement was ongoing with Scottish government digital directorate and that this would continue.

29.   The board accepted that some of the roles being recruited for were not needed in RoS longer term. Over the current period of high delivery, some of the roles are contract roles. The incumbents of these would be expected to undertake some succession planning to ensure continuity when their time in role comes to an end.

Information assurance and access – data

30.   Tom advised that he was engaging with an external source, who had previous experience of RoS' data, to provide a workshop to review both textual and mapping data. Between now and March, testing of what good data looks like in RoS will take place.

31.   The board thanked Tom for the update but queried the level of visibility of the current changes and recruitment to the rest of the business.

32.   Sheenagh noted that the business was focusing on the designated day and that communications of other changes would be undertaken after that date.

33.   Tom advised the board that they would get an update on the development of the digital strategy at the February meeting.

34.   Stephen Dingle cautioned the board that they needed to be clear on the differentiation between the IT strategy, the digital strategy and the digital

transformation programme. All terms seem to be used interchangeably and they needed to be clarified and agreed.

35. The board discussed the issues around maintaining data standards and agreed that this would be addressed by the data strategy. Kenny Crawford suggested that RoS consider the possibility of a chief data officer post but noted that the strategy should be set out first.

Estates strategy – *RoSBrd2014/11/04*

36. Sheenagh welcomed Jim McConnell to the meeting.

37. Jim presented the board with a proposed estates strategy, which provoked considerable discussion.

38. The board agreed that the development of an estates strategy was difficult without an agreed long-term vision for RoS.

39. The board would meet in May 2015 to develop its long term vision for RoS.

40. The board agreed that, short term, the estates options should be kept as open as possible. Longer term, the board would devote time at their May meeting to clarifying the vision and the timescale for the vision; this would enable areas to develop strategies over that timeline.

41. The board agreed that any large-scale work (heating and windows upgrade) would be postponed until after the visioning work was complete. In the interim, Jim and Billy Harkness would continue to make sensible tactical decisions that would not affect longer-term strategic work.

42. The board thanked Jim for the work he had undertaken and agreed that this would feed in to their long term visioning work at the May board.

Scottish government, non-executive director development day

43. Ben Gray updated the board on the day, which he attended on behalf of RoS. Stephen Dingle had been the event chair.

44. Ben commented that the day had been very useful and he was hopeful that this type of event would be held again. It had provided useful exposure to core Scottish government and the diversity of thought processes across other agencies and the core.

Financial update
Corporate plan assumptions - *RoSBrd2014/11/05*

45. John Fanning presented the board with a paper on the corporate plan process and assumptions. The board noted the paper and approved the proposed timetable, assumptions and process.

46.   John Fanning would present the draft corporate plan to the February EMT and the May Board.

Reserves policy - *RoSBrd2014/11/06*

47.   John introduced his paper, which provided the board with an update on RoS' reserves. The board discussed and agreed the policy as set out in the paper. They agreed that they would continue to monitor the policy and reserve levels on a six-monthly basis until decisions about completion of the land register had been made. It was suggested that consideration should be given to re-naming the policy and noting reserve levels were a target. John agreed that he would consider this for the next review in May 2015.

Financial delegations - *RoSBrd2014/11/07*

48.   The board agreed the financial delegations as set out in the paper. Jas Patyal queried whether there was a lifespan to the approval levels, which John would advise by correspondence.

Human resources and organisational development update -
RoSBrd2014/11/08

49.   Sheenagh welcomed Sharon Wilson to the meeting.

50.   Sharon presented the board with an update on key objectives within the HR function and the strategies supporting delivery of the corporate plan. She supplemented this with a timeline for key deliverables within the directorate.

51.   The board noted that the future for human resources and organisation development within RoS looked very different and noted that there was a lot of work and change within the HR department.

Civil service people survey

52.   The board heard from Billy Harkness and Isla MacLeod, who reported to the board the first level results from the recent civil service people survey.

53.   RoS' engagement score was 58%, which was up eight percent on the previous year. A notable change was in leadership and managing change, which was up 13% on the previous year. A full breakdown would be available in December.

54.   The board noted the update and agreed they would continue to look at all feedback and take appropriate action where necessary.

Project updates
Land and buildings transaction tax - *RoSBrd2014/11/09*

55.　　John King updated the board on the project.　He explained that Audit Scotland were due to report on the launch of the tax shortly.　RoS would appear alongside Revenue Scotland and SEPA at the Public Audit and Finance Committees on 17 December.

56.　　The board acknowledged that RoS' role in the project was significantly reduced from that first envisaged but that our role and responsibilities were clear.

Land Register completion -
57.　　An update paper was presented to the board by John King.

58.　　Consultation events had been held in Inverness, Glasgow and Edinburgh, alongside sector-specific meetings with local authorities, volume conveyancers and Scottish Land and Estates.

59.　　Forty-eight responses to the consultation have been received and work has begun to review these.　The final consultation report would be published by 4 February.

60.　　Charles Keegan had been appointed to the new post of Head of Land Register Completion (LRC).　This post has a place on EMT and reports to the Business Development Director.

61.　　Further recruitment is underway and RoS will shortly complete the recruitment of two stakeholder engagement managers, one for the public sector and one for the private and third sectors.

62.　　The board noted the update.

2012 Act implementation/transition -
63.　　John King reminded the board that there were 25 days until the designated day.

64.　　To date, RoS had undertaken three IT deployments for the new act and all of these had been successful.　The next deployment was the launch of the reports portal, which would have a soft launch that weekend.

65.　　The board noted that on the Thursday and Friday prior to the designated day, the sasine and land registers would be closed for business. All other registers and commercial services would be available.

66.　　John reassured the board that he was as confident as he could be at this point and that extra IT support had been put in place as risk mitigation.

67.　　He informed the board that the 2012 Act implementation roadshows had been very well received and feedback had been very positive.

68.　　The board discussed the progress made on the project and the hard work and commitment of everyone involved.　They asked John to pass on their thanks to all involved for their work so far.

Key risk register and issue log - *RoSBrd2014/11/10*

69.   The board noted the key risks and issues. They noted that risks seven and eight affected objective 5 and that this should be noted on the risk and issues table. They acknowledged that EMT had recommended removal of the issue on the lack of IT resource and agreed that this issue had been resolved.

Reflections on the day

70.   Sheenagh noted that she was adding this back on to the agenda and asked that executive and non-executive members consider whether there was anything they felt they needed to see on the agenda for the next board meeting.

Papers for noting

71.   The board noted the following reports:
* performance and financial management report
* directorate plan update
* elevator pitch.

Any other business

72.   Sheenagh noted that there was a stakeholder Christmas event on 16 December to which all board members were invited.

73.   The board meeting on 17 December remained tentative in schedules

Details of next meeting

74.   Tentative meeting on 17 December.

75.   Next scheduled meeting on 25 and 26 February and includes the annual risk review with the audit committee.