

NORTHERN LIGHTHOUSE BOARD

MANAGING BOARD

MINUTES – 27 January 2020

PRESENT:	Mike Brew	Chair
	Alastair Beveridge	Vice-Chair
	Elaine Wilkinson	Commissioner
	Hugh Shaw	Commissioner
	Brian Archibald	Commissioner
	Alison Di Rollo	Commissioner
	Craig Turnbull	Commissioner
	Mike Bullock	Chief Executive
	Phil Day	Director of Operations
	Mairi Rae	Director of Business Services

IN ATTENDANCE:	Jim McBrier	Risk and Improvement Manager
	Karen Charleson	Senior Executive Assistant (minutes)

This meeting was held by Zoom due to COVID-19.

The Managing Board welcomed Commissioner Turnbull to his first meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE & DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Apologies were received from Commissioner Woodward.

2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Minutes of the Managing Board meeting held on 12 November 2020 were agreed as a correct record and could now be published on the website.

Action: Senior Executive Assistant

3. MATTERS ARISING

The Managing Board noted the Matters Arising paper and reviewed the following items:

Project Restart – This has now become business as usual. The key item for restart will be homeworking and how future flexible working will be handled.

Apprentices – The Young Persons Guarantee Scheme has now been launched. Commissioner Woodward had made the necessary introductions and the Chief Executive and HR Manager have a meeting on 28 February 2021 to find out more details. NLB also has an ambition to have two 'KickStart' scheme placements in Oban Base. Requests for further information from the Government provider have so far not realised any results.

Noise Assessment - Travel to undertake noise assessments of the vessels has not yet been possible due to COVID-19. This item will be kept on the Agenda.

Action: Senior Executive Assistant

Pentland Firth - The MCA has been contacted and discussions held regarding a suitable

warning. A report will be given to the next Navigation Committee.

Action: Director of Operations

84 George Street Refurbishment – The plans for the proposed layout have not yet been brought to a final draft. The plans will be tabled at a future meeting.

Action: Chief Executive

Maritime Mutual Support Group – CalMac were contacted regarding their recent experience of dealing with COVID on a vessel and have shared their procedures and cleaning company contacts.

Report from the Environmental Committee – The HS&E report contains an environmental summary. As agreed, a full report will be tabled at the November 2021 meeting. Commissioner Woodward is still to discuss with Commissioner Beveridge his suggestion that the initiatives should be included in future Corporate Plans and linked to the overall carbon commitment to ensure that a more holistic view is taken.

Action: Commissioner Woodward

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT

The Managing Board noted the report from the Chief Executive, highlighting items from the Departmental reports and backed up by the full reports.

Safety

There have been no reportable incidents since the last Managing Board.

HS&E Report

Chromium VI – Information was received from the engine manufacturer that there may be deposits of hexavalent chromium (chromium VI) within the ships exhaust system. Appropriate actions have been taken.

COVID-19

The NLB Business Continuity Team continue to meet at least weekly or as circumstances dictate. Policy and Risk Assessments have been updated to respond to new information and changing policy most recently in early January following further restrictions introduced by the Scottish Government.

NLB staff continue to be kept aware of the situation via policy updates, by a weekly email sent by Chief Executive and there is also a Friday coffee break via Zoom at which all staff can attend to keep in touch with other NLB staff. Staff morale is assessed to be good with positive feedback, but the implications of new restrictions, poor weather and short days on individual well-being are being monitored by managers.

Voluntary lateral flow testing has been in place for the ships for some time but it has now been rolled out to staff and contractors. Up take by staff is good. There is no intention to make testing compulsory. There is currently 4 crew members shielding, all conditions were known to NLB and the Director of Operations is confident the ENG process is working for NLB seafarers.

Maritime Mutual Support (MMSG) - The NLB instigated Maritime Mutual Support Group continues to provide a very helpful forum to participating organisations. The direct exchange of experience and best practice related to COVID continues. The frequency of the MMSG remains at fortnightly but this will be kept under review and will be adjusted as necessary to meet the operational need.

Operations Report

Outages - Since the last meeting there has been ten outages over 72 hours – Portain, Drover Rock, and Appin Point buoys all Cat 2; Fair Isle (South), Sule Skerry, Flannan Isles, Skerryvore, Dubh Artach, Chicken Rock Lights and Skerryvore Racon all Cat 1. All have been restored.

There are plans for the Summer to undertake remedial work at Skerryvore and Dubh Artach to resolve underlying issues.

Commissioner Shaw asked whether it would be possible to have a virtual light on a Cat 1 AtoN e.g. Chicken Rock. The Director of Operations advised that this may be possible but not something that could be done quickly. This will be included as a topic for discussion at the next Navigation Committee.

Action: Director of Operations

NLV PHAROS - At the end of November and early December the vessel undertook the Annual Rig inspection followed by east coast LLA inspections before spending Christmas and New Year alongside in Leith. The Starboard windlass clutch issue previously highlighted is being addressed during the planned self-maintenance period which commenced in Leith on 20 January 2021.

POLE STAR – During November the vessel conducted LLA inspections and buoy work in the Clyde area with a new Chief Officer joining for induction. In December, the vessel responded to a number of buoy casualties and conducted routine buoy work in the Oban and Outer Hebrides areas before going alongside Oban for Christmas and New Year.

Following a planned retirement, and no successful internal applicants, an experienced offshore Master has been recruited. There will be an extensive handover prior to him taking command.

COVID-19 - The reintroduction of lockdown and shielding has brought some issues to the vessel operations resulting in the new Chief Officer having to take temporary command. The vessel activities have been limited in this period to ensure the acting Master can operate within his capabilities. The vessel remains available for risk response from Orkney.

Lighthouse maintenance has been reviewed and the teams are remaining local or staying on NLB sites. Overnights in hotels etc are being limited and the team bubbles are being maintained.

Helicopter - The Helicopter has been utilised to Store lighthouses and support project work. Weather has disrupted a number of activities including delays in attending outages.

EU Exit – The Director of Operation provided a verbal update on the current position regarding the helicopter contract.

Oban Base - Routine operations supporting cargo preparation, buoy refurbishment and helicopter operations have continued.

Navigation – The Annual Inspection of Oil & Gas platforms was undertaken by NLV PHAROS 26 November – 10 December 2020 covering some 60 platform inspections. Subsequently, a further 22 have been inspected. An acceptable level of inspections has been achieved this year.

Programme and Renewals - Work continues at a number of sites however weather continues to delay progress at Barra Head and broader COVID issues has resulted in contractors being less keen to attend site. The contractor has been doing some further work to restrict numbers and have better separation in the cooking and social areas. Testing is also available.

Slip repairs at Holy Island and installation of the Portain Beacon have also been severely

impacted by the weather.

Monitoring Project – The issue with the NLB Routers has delayed progress. The contractor is now working on the system but there remains concerns and delays with this project.

Delivery and Planning - Technicians are operating in bubbles and avoiding overnight accommodation in hotels etc. Maintenance is continuing but on a reduced basis due to these constraints.

Oban Bay - The Stakeholder Group is continuing to progress towards harbour orders and is liaising with the Council regarding taking on the North pier. A programme with clear milestones has been issued which takes the overall process into late summer.

It was noted that there had been commercial scallop divers in the large vessel channel in the last few months that were reported to the Health & Safety Executive and MCA. Action is being taken against them.

Electric vehicles - An electric van has been in use in Oban for some months and has largely been utilised for short journeys. Range, along with charging points at remote sites is the key issues. To this end charging points in Edinburgh and at mains powered lighthouses are being planned where feasible.

Commissioner Wilkinson advised that the Police, Fire and Ambulance are currently switching to electric vehicles and are installing infrastructure supported by Transport Scotland. In due course, there may be some way of collaborating with the emergency services to tap into some of the infrastructure. It is probably too early in the process at the moment but NLB should be mindful of this for the future. The Chief Executive will raise with Transport Scotland.

Action: Chief Executive

HR Report

Sick Absence - Sick Absence remains steady with long term cases being high. There are a few cases that are now being progressed due to appointments and reports being received from the NHS. Shore based short term absence has declined, it is likely this is due to most employees working from home where they are less exposed to illnesses/infections.

Business Services Report

ICT - ICT continue to monitor the impact of recent cyber incidents including the well-publicised SolarWinds Orion product issue.

Commissioner Beveridge asked what NLB's policy was should they fall victim to a similar cyber-attack the issue was discussed and the Director of Business Services agreed to provide an update at the next meeting.

Action: Director of Business Services

Office 365 project - All user email accounts have now been transferred into the Cloud and testing of the Microsoft Teams communications client is underway. The plan is to transfer our existing SharePoint data onto the new platform before utilising the document management and collaboration elements of Teams. A number of work streams are underway to prepare for the transition to the new version of SharePoint including the Business Classification Scheme, metadata review and archiving project.

Procurement - Following the UK exit from the EU there is still a high level of uncertainty surrounding the new procurement regulations which will be implemented. The Procurement Team and other NLB staff are remaining alert to upcoming changes and undergoing training as information and clarification becomes available.

There continues to be a move to standardisation and common information across Government with Cabinet Office keen to implement Standard Terms and Standard ITT (invitation to tender) documents across all areas. DfT have asked for feedback by the end of January for them to collate their response to Cabinet Office. Cabinet Office have also circulated a Green Paper for Consultation (UK Needs) which requires a response to DfT by February.

Management Reporting pack December 2020 (Period 9) – The Managing Board noted the Management reporting pack. The pack is the latest re-forecast following meetings with budget holders regarding remaining revenue spend in the financial year and discussions with project managers around the delivery of capital projects for 2020/21.

Sanction 2021-2022 - The 2021-2026 Corporate Plan has now been approved by the formal sanction letter from the Minister dated 11 December 2020. Discussion took place around the vessel replacement costs.

2020-21 Annual Report and Accounts and Audit - National Audit Office commenced their interim audit on 25 January, with the final fieldwork commencing 28 June 2021. The interim audit will take place remotely, with requests by NAO provided in advance.

Vessel Charter Work - Due to the latest COVID restrictions charter work scheduled to take place in February has been cancelled. It is hoped to carry out this work later in 2021.

Buoy Maintenance - Despite the current circumstances it is hoped that the scheduled buoy maintenance plan can go ahead as usual for our commercial contracts.

Estates update - A GIAA audit of NLB Estates Management processes has commenced. The Estates Administrator is co-ordinating the collation of information for the auditor, with support from the Assets Manager and Business Support Manager.

Diligence queries have now been sent to seller's solicitor regarding the land purchase for the new lighthouse at Rubha Cuil Cheanna,

Risk & Improvement

ISO Certification - NLB's approach to 'Risk Based Thinking' remains front and centre of our Integrated Business Management System. This is supported by NLB's commitment to our externally certificated ISO standards. Following the first tranche of ISO 45001, 9001 and 14001 Audits, all key focus areas identified have remained on the Executive Group radar, in preparation for the forthcoming Audit in February 2021. An interim surveillance audit of ISO 27001 provided a useful range of opportunities for improvement, in advance of the forthcoming audit, also scheduled for February 2021.

Environmental Risk Management - Within the context of NLB's Environmental Management System, the work undertaken to embed environmental risks at the departmental level via the utilisation of the Departmental Risk Registers remains ongoing and was well received by Lloyds during the last ISO Audit Process.

DfT have confirmed that NLB will require to commence sustainability reporting against the Greening Government Commitment Framework from 1 April 2021. This requires additional quarterly reporting via DfT in relation to an enhanced range of environmental requirements and targets.

Escalated Risk Overview - Since the last Managing Board, there have been four escalated risks relating to: Ships Catering; Monitoring Centre Resilience; Hire Car Management and Obsolete Technology at AtoN Stations. All are currently open and under treatment.

Executive Group - Deep Dive Risk Reviews - The process continues to drive the effective early identification of risk, in addition to providing for ever increasing levels of collaboration and inter-departmental support via the Executive Group. Twenty deep dive reviews have now been completed across all departments.

Tri GLA Brexit Risk Register - Following on from the recently announced deal, the register will be updated during the IGC forum in February 2021.

Business Continuity - The Risk & Improvement Manager continues to review, in collaboration with the Executive Group, how NLB would manage a further compounding event or impact, in the light of the current response environment. A Business Continuity Exercise (Exercise Ozone) was held on 11 December 2020 utilising a simulated (virtual) desktop incident at Cape Wrath Lighthouse. The exercise was well received by all attendees and included participation from both the Coastguard and SEPA. A range of valuable lessons learned were identified and will be raised as PIs within NLB's Business Management System.

Organisation

Virtual Quiz Night - As part of the ongoing efforts to maintain morale and engagement, a professional provider ran a virtual quiz for staff members on the evening on 26 November 2020 which had around 50 members of staff taking part. Due to the popularity of this, a second quiz is planned for 28 January 2021.

Annual Staff Meeting – The Annual Staff Meeting was held on 17 December 2020. In addition to the Annual 'State of the Nation' address which provided a roundup of the year and a look ahead to 2021 by the Chief Executive, a series of briefings and updates were provided virtually including Fraud Awareness, Vessel Replacement, Procurement, Risk, Future Projects and the new Corran Narrows Light.

NLB Annual Raffle - The Annual Raffle was held virtually and was hosted from 84 George Street by comedian Craig Hill. The Raffle raised a total of £2010 for the charity Cash for Kids.

NLB Children - There were 13 great entries to the Christmas card competition with the winner having their card professionally printed. All entrants received a selection box.

Annual Board Evaluation - The form has been sent out to Commissioners, Chief Executive and Directors on behalf of the Chair. Deadline for completion is 19 February 2021.

External Engagement

Complaint - A complaint was received regarding NLB contractors taking access to conduct work at North Ronaldsay during lockdown in January 2021. The Chief Executive responded explaining that the Community had been engaged/consulted through the North Ronaldsay Trust and that all measures had been put in place to ensure conformity with Government Regulations. The Complainant was satisfied with the response and expressed thanks for the swift action to address their email.

Director – Maritime - The rescheduling of the cancelled meeting of the Chief Executive and the Chair with the Director - Maritime for the annual Board Evaluation remains outstanding.

MCA Chief Executive - A catch-up meeting with the Chief Executive and Director of Operations has been scheduled with the MCA Chief Executive.

IoM Wreck Table-Top Exercise - A table-top exercise was held on 12 January 2021 with participation from IoM Harbours, DfT, SOSREP and NLB. The scenarios promoted very good discussion and the feedback on the event was universally positive. A number of actions were identified and will be captured in a post-exercise report.

Ernst & Young (EY) - In early January the Chief Executive met virtually with the EY consultant who led the NLB Organisational Review for a catch up.

Scottish Maritime Cluster (SMC) - Following the success of NLV PHAROS during London International Shipping Week (LISW) in 2019, NLB is leading the arrangements for the SMC's reception during LISW 2021. Permission has been granted to hold the event at the Scotland Office's building Dover House on Whitehall on 13 September 2021.

National Library of Scotland Talk – The Chief Executive presented to an online audience on 10 November 2020 as part of the National Library of Scotland's events programme. Feedback received by NLS has been very positive. A recording of the presentation is available via the NLS YouTube channel.

Museum of Scottish Lighthouses - Following the introduction of travel restrictions the decision was taken by the Museum to close until the Spring, placing the majority of staff on full furlough with the Museum Manager and Collections Manager going onto partial furlough. NLHT will continue to provide support the Museum, subject to the necessary checks and balances.

Media Coverage. Since the last Managing Board there has been further and very positive coverage of NLB activity across all media types.

Dashboard

The Managing Board noted the updated Dashboard. The increase in problems offshore, particularly at Pillar Rocks, was noted.

5. ANY CLARIFICATION (BY EXCEPTION) ON OPERATING REPORTS

Estate Update - Fair Isle

The Chair asked for further information on the proposals for shared use of the buildings at Fair Isle. The Chief Executive advised that NLB was at the initial stage of the outreach to see what could be possible for the development of the unused rooms at the site.

Accident/Incident Rate

Commissioner Beveridge highlighted that the accident/incident rate had dropped dramatically over the last 9-10 months and whether there was any learning that could be taken from that e.g. changes to working practices that could be incorporated in the longer-term. The Chief Executive explained that due to the small numbers it does not take much for the statistics to show impressive changes. If you look at the numbers of incidents the change is actually very small – one incident makes a big difference.

6. INTRODUCTON TO DRIVING SAFELY

Driving still remains one of the biggest risks to the workforce. A large percentage of NLB staff drive for work visiting NLB or third-party Aids to Navigation, visiting or joining/leaving NLB vessels in ports around Scotland and on occasion further afield, travelling to and from Oban for a variety of purposes and making numerous miscellaneous visits to third parties. The paper,

circulated with the Agenda, outlines the associated thematic proposals and control measures to further enhance employee safety, in addition to that of other road users by making improvements to augment the published Driving Policy that is already in place.

The Managing Board discussed and endorsed the measures outlined within the paper. The paper will now go to the Trade Unions for consultation.

7. ENGAGEMENT SURVEY

The NLB employee engagement survey was open from August 2020 to October 2020. The majority of questions remained the same as the 2019 survey to allow direct comparisons and identify areas that have improved or not improved. A total of 137 responses were received, which is the same number of responses as in 2019.

Due to the exceptional circumstances during 2020, it was agreed to add questions relating to the Coronavirus Pandemic. This meant that two separate surveys were issued for shore-based employees and ship-based employees as both sets of employees have worked differently during the pandemic.

The shore-based survey included an additional set of questions relating to how employees felt about working from home and how they would like to work in the future. Work has commenced on a process of taking employees opinions into consideration along with ensuring the appropriate balance of team working and communication. Within the Annual Review of Board Effectiveness there is also a series of questions around virtual meetings and how the Corporate Calendar is fulfilled in the future ensuring interaction between the Non-Executives and staff is maintained. Until the survey work is completed the true indications for how many people will be in the building on a particular day is unknown, but it is recognised that everybody will need to have a place to work at some stage in their working cycle. NLB have made a commitment, given the situation with the pandemic, that people will have their own space but will use the spaces more flexibly for bringing people together for team working, etc.

Consideration will also be given to using existing KPIs to measure improvement, sick absence, efficiency and environmental benefits.

It was noted that COVID-19 vaccinations will be treated in the same way as flu jabs with staff being allowed time off to attend appointments. On this basis (given NLB's operational constraints) Managers will work with staff to ensure flexibility to enable all employees to manage their attendance.

The Managing Board noted and discussed the results of the Survey. The results were incredibly encouraging and backup the overall exceptionally good culture within NLB. Any suggestions on how to increase the number of people responding would be welcomed.

8. VESSEL REPLACEMENT PROJECT BOARD

The Chief Executive as Senior Responsible Owner (SRO), and other key members of the project team attended a virtual DfT Commercial Assurance Board (CAB) on 17 December 2020.

At CAB – Stage 1 NLB delivered the draft Procurement Strategy, draft Outline Business Case, cover report, and an updated summary presentation for the Vessel Replacement Project. CAB have advised that they are happy to support the development of NLB's strategy, and that they are granting Assured status with an 'Amber' RAG.

GIAA's second audit on the Vessel Replacement Project received a substantial outcome. The GIAA auditor also attended CAB Stage 1 in the role of observer.

The draft Outline Business Case (OBC) and Annexes were sent to the Centres of Excellence (CoEs) and DfT Analytical Advisors on 18 December 2020 for early engagement and review prior to the formal approvals process. The Integrated Project Team's focus is now on incorporating DfT's feedback into the OBC prior to its formal submission to the CoEs, planning the project's Industry Day (26 February 2021), and compilation of the Selection Questionnaire (SQ). Commissioners are welcome to participate the Industry Day if they wish to do so.

The Technical Working Group continues to work with contracted consultants on the development of a detailed Technical Specification that will feed into the ITT. The model test was completed in December 2020, the first draft of the Technical Specification has been received and the General Arrangement is in the final stages of development.

Legal advisors have been appointed and initial meetings have taken place.

It was noted that Commissioner Archibald will replace Commissioner Beveridge on the Project Board from April 2021.

9. REPORT FROM THE HS&E COMMITTEE

The Managing Board noted the minutes from the meeting held on 11 November 2020. The next meeting will be held on 27 January 2021.

It was noted that Commissioner Wilkinson will be taking over from Commissioner Beveridge on the Committee as from April 2021.

10. REPORT FROM THE NAVIGATION COMMITTEE

The Managing Board noted the minutes from the meeting held on 9 December 2020. Commissioner Beveridge, as Chair of the Committee gave a verbal update to the meeting covering:

- The challenges around the Pillar Rocks
- Issues around reliability with Racons, etc
- Stats remain good
- Net zero challenge – NLB will be committed to charge cycle for many years to come if the pillar rocks are refurbished in the same way. The Director of Operations has requested that the Assets Team look at a different approach and identify a renewables solution. This scoping proposal would likely result in a range reduction as there is an exponential/doubling rise in power demand per mile. This proposal will come to the Navigation Committee in due course to consider as a possible solution.

11. INTER-GLA MATTERS

RPI-X – The need to recommend options for an RPI-X efficiency measure to the Minister in June will be challenging.

Corporate Planning (Multilateral) Meeting - The meeting took place virtually on 24 November 2020. The meeting was very convivial with the Corporate Plans receiving positive feedback.

Lights Finance Committee (LFC) - Commissioner Woodward attended the LFC Meeting on 26 January 2021. The meeting discussed the rate of Light Dues and the LAC are to come back with a formal response to the proposal. A decision is expected around mid-February 2021.

Vessel Replacement Project – There has been a very constructive discussions with TH in relation to the procurement phase of the ship project, sharing information on SQs and financial evaluation.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Annual Board Effectiveness Review

Commissioners are encouraged to complete and return the form by the deadline (19 February 2021). Commissioners' who feel they are unable to contribute to the evaluation are requested to provide a 'Nil Return'.

Independence

In acknowledgement of the possibility of a second Scottish Independence Referendum it is proposed that the Board of Commissioners will revisit the work undertaken prior to the referendum in 2014 and also the high-level SWOT analysis, which examines the issues through a contemporary lens, which was presented to the Managing Board in January 2020.

Action: Chief Executive

Purdah

NLB is subject to Purdah and instructions will be issued to Commissioners in due course.

13. CORPORATE CALENDAR

The Managing Board noted the Corporate Calendars for 2021. Meetings will continue to be held virtually until further notice.