

THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-SEVENTH MEETING

09:30 THURSDAY 26 APRIL 2018

IN THE BOARDROOM OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM

MINUTES

Trustees present:

Sir Charles Dunstone, Chairman
Joyce Bridges
Dr Aminul Hoque
Professor Chris Lintott
Carol Marlow
Jeremy Penn
Eric Reynolds
Gerald Russell
Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope

In attendance:

Kevin Fewster Director
Andy Bodle Director, Operations and HR
Eleanor Harris Director, Visitor Experience and Enterprises
Mike Sarna Director, Collections and Public Engagement
Kate Seeckts Director, Development.
Christopher Gray Museum Secretary

The meeting began with a Trustee in camera session with the Director.

~Board Matters~

Progress on Trustee Recruitment

The Chairman reported that the interviews (bar one) for the three new Trustees (with the skillsets of an academic, an astronomer, and a lawyer) had been held on 25 March and the rest of the process would follow.

~Governance Session~

- 1. Apologies**
Received from Anupam Ganguli, Director, Finance and IT, for family reasons.
- 2. Declaration of relevant interests related to this meeting**
None other than those previously registered.
- 3. Meeting dates for 2019**
The Chairman drew Trustees' attention to the schedule of meetings for 2019 which were **noted**.
- 4. Draft Minutes of Board meeting 356 of 22 February 2018**
The Board **agreed** the minutes to be a true record of the meeting and the Chairman of the Board certified the minutes accordingly.

Referring to the recovery of Margetts' Astronomical Chronometer No. 311, the Director reported that since the agenda item at the February Board meeting matters have changed and the Director updated the Board on the current position.

There were no other matters arising that were not dealt with in the meeting.

5. Director's Report and updates for March to April 2018

Regarding the potential acquisition of the Titanic collection the Director updated the Board on the complex and shifting legal situation that the Museum was working through with its specialist US lawyers.

Trustees heard that RMG had been advised, through the US legal team, to bid \$19.2m for the collection and the attendant intellectual property. It was understood by Trustees that that this was an offer entirely contingent on successful fundraising. The Director explained, and the Board noted, that an important incentive to the bid was that the existing leases of travelling exhibitions would be honoured and for some to be extended for a further 2 years.

Overall Trustees noted that the Museum was making the best progress possible in this complex environment and **agreed** to go forward with the \$19.2m bid and attendant lease extensions – with the justification of a short-term inconvenience being outweighed by an in perpetuity acquisition.

It was also agreed that the Director inform DCMS of this decision to keep the Department abreast of progress.

In addition to the above the Director spoke to the following aspects of his report:

- the industrial relation situation: detailing the 15p an hour one-off offer that had been made (for which the union was grateful) but that this had been rejected by the membership and that therefore one more day's industrial action would occur. Trustees noted from previous actions that the Museum is capable of staying open and were assured that it would do so again.
- that the Kehinde Wiley acquisition is now on display in the Queen's House
- that visitation in February, March, and April to date, had been under budget due primarily to bad weather – though RMG was still tenth in the annual ALVA visitor figures for cultural attractions.

6. Director, Finance and IT Report

6.1 Finance Report at P11 2017-18; cashflow at 16 April 2018; and Directors' expenses for Q4 2017-18

In the absence of the Director, Finance and IT, the Director reported on the Museum's management accounts for the year to 28 February.

The Chairman of the Audit Committee stated that he had recently met the Director, Finance to go through the management accounts and that he was entirely content with the results.

Trustees then **noted** the Finance Report at P11, the cashflow to October 2018 and the Directors' expenses for Q4 2017-18.

6.2 Income update for FY ending 31 March 2018

Trustees **noted** the income update for the year .

6.3 Resolution to designate *Cutty Sark* surplus

Trustees were then taken through the draft revenue outturn paper and resolved that of the draft surplus of £493k, the £131k *Cutty Sark* surplus (after the management charge of £400k) is to be designated to the *Cutty Sark* Preservation Fund and the remaining £362k to go to the NMM Development Fund.

6.4 Strategic Risk Register as at April 2018

The Director confirmed that the register had been reviewed by the Executive earlier in the month. There were no matters arising and Trustees then noted and **approved** the Strategic Risk Register as at April 2018.

7. Endeavour project progress report including collections move update

Trustees **noted** the report and the overall excellent progress of this very significant project for the Museum. The Board was particularly pleased that the move of some 37,000 collection items had gone very well (and noted the Internal Audit report which had given a green rating to the process) and would be complete by the end of April. Trustees requested their thanks and congratulations to be passed on to the Collections Management staff and other staff involved.

8. Acquisition: *Ship of Fools* by Kehinde Wiley

For the purposes of the record, the Trustees noted their earlier agreement, which had been exercised via email, to acquire the *Ship of Fools* by Kehinde Wiley. Trustees commented that the funding of the acquisition with the very important support of stakeholders such as the Art Fund had gone very well and again requested their congratulations to be passed on to all those involved.

9. Data Protection Act 2018 and the GDPR compliance

The Director, Operations and HR, as Data Protection Officer, took Trustees through the compliance report. Trustees noted that the Museum itself was providing a statement of reasonable assurance with regard to its processing but that, as of the 26 April meeting date, there were two external processors who had not yet been able to give their assurance on compliance.

~Strategy Session~

10. Collections

10.1 Collections Development Policy (update)

10.2 Collections Research Strategy

The Director introduced Stuart Bligh, Head of Research and Information; Christine Riding, Head of Art and Curator of the Queen's House; and Quintin Colville, Senior Curator: Research.

The Director stated that the Collections Development Policy and the Collections Research Strategy are the key strategic documents for the Museum providing the focus for the work of specialist curatorial staff in relation to research and collections and ensuring this work actively supports and informs programmes, publications, events, galleries and exhibitions. The two documents are closely related and the expectation is that they will evolve together over the next few years.

The Collection Development Policy has been updated and changed to focus on the Museum's aspirations for collection development alongside more practical information on collection management. The new policy gives a clearer idea of the strengths and weaknesses in the collections and the resulting priorities for collection development over the next 4 years.

The Research Strategy also takes a new approach and seeks to identify the Museum's research aspirations over a longer period under generic themes strongly linked to the collections, subjects and sites which are relevant to all departments.

The Director also added that both documents had been approved to come to the Board by the Collections Development Committee.

Christine Riding then gave the meeting a presentation on the **Collection Development Policy**.

Trustees heard that the important change from the prior version is that the document now contains a vision statement entitled Collecting for a Shared Future alongside a collection development summary, collecting criteria and plans for the permanent collection and an approach for post-1945 collecting (this last of which is a new feature).

Other important changes include:

- the introduction of scoring tables which give better clarity in terms of the strengths and priorities for each collection
- the identification of collections and collection categories which need review and areas for specific attention such as the continuing integration of the *Cutty Sark* collections
- a review of the sound archive
- the policy highlights collections that are nationally and internationally important.

Trustees noted that the Collection Development Policy is also a practical document containing information on how the Museum acquires and manages its collections and details of the requirements in terms of process, standards and statutory requirements and is also need for accreditation.

Quintin Colville then gave the meeting a presentation on the **Research Strategy**.

Trustees heard that the aim of the strategy is to plan and manage research so that it feeds naturally into our programmes, exhibitions and galleries. This

longer-term approach should also result in more innovative research and encourage more co-ordinated and ambitious applications for research funding.

Trustees noted that an important part of the development of the strategy has involved identifying key themes which suit the Museum's collections, subject areas and sites, and which work equally from academic and visitor perspectives. Twelve have been identified initially (including race and diversity, trade, migration, leisure and exploration), in a process that will provide the museum with options for further prioritization. Alongside the development of these themes, there has been close analysis of the Museum's post-1800 collections to highlight their strengths and weaknesses, and the opportunities they might present. Holdings in this area are extremely wide-ranging but have often been under-exploited in terms of research and display. These issues – and the broader question of the Museum's engagement with and representation of the modern period – have been identified by the research strategy as areas of particular interest alongside important, site-specific research initiatives focused on the Royal Observatory, the Queen's House and Cutty Sark.

There are also significant ways in which research relating to all of our sites can respond to very topical interest in the current and historical nature of Britain's relationship with the rest of the world.

Trustees had the following observations: they noted with pleasure the section on small craft; liked the mediation to new audiences – the new galleries will be reaching out too; how the documents will help with collaborative projects; the way they can be used to reach out to Universities for research funding; but realised that the challenge was in selecting what is actually undertaken.

Trustees also commented that the papers were essentially a supply-side approach and requested some thought be given to how the Museum goes about ascertaining what audiences actually want to see happen.

In conclusion the two documents were very well received by the Board. The Trustees thanked the staff involved then **approved** the Collections Development Policy and **noted** the Research Strategy.

11. Enrichment update and way-finding presentations

Trustees received presentations from Matthew Lawrence, Senior Manager, Exhibitions and Galleries on the Enrichment project and Lisa Leigh, Head of Marketing and Web on the parallel way-finding project.

Trustees understood that the Enrichment project will bring the standard of the welcome and circulation areas in NMMG up to the standard of the forthcoming Endeavour project galleries and that the way-finding project capitalises on the clarity the new circulation routes were going to provide for the visitor journey.

Trustees also noted with pleasure the significant support for the Enrichment project received from the Foundation.

Trustees were grateful for the very clear presentations and the planning and work done to date which the Board considered exemplary and very welcome.

The Board was also pleased to learn that the approach would be widened to other parts of RMG as part of future thinking.

Trustees asked whether there were plans to provide visitors with a preferred route and were told that this would not be available upon the opening of the new galleries but that there were several options planned for routes to specific highlights and specific trails thereafter.

Trustees also noted that "Ground Floor" can be culturally specific and were told that this aspect of the way-finding was very much under consideration at the moment in terms of the alternatives of : 0; Ground; and 1.

The Board thanked the presenters for leading the work and highly commended both the Enrichment and way-finding projects.

12. Discussion of the Corporate Plan at Strategy and Activity level

The Director introduced the Plan's latest iteration stating that the indicative milestones are, at this stage, examples only.

Finally, the Trustees were pleased to endorse the overall title for the 2018-22 Corporate Plan as *Building on our success*.

Trustees had several comments and recommendations:

- it was still difficult to draw a connection line between the Plan's activities and the five themes – could the milestones be coded per theme?
- re Landscaping theme – the Museum should work more closely with the ORNC to reconnect over the road – how do we sit in the W.H.S.?
- the Research Strategy should be used to connect to wider audiences – this could be made more explicit
- can more be made of our ambassadors - Honorary Commodores et al?
- while recognising the need to adopt some elements of the language of the culture sector and its stakeholders, overall Trustees considered the Plan should be more clearly expressed.

Trustees were then pleased to agree the suggestion by the Director, Collections and Public Engagement, that the Plan be entitled "Building on our success" which the Board considered was an accurate summation of both the last 10 years and the period ahead.

The Director confirmed that the Plan would incorporate points made by Trustees and come back to the 5 July Board meeting with the milestone level populated.

13. Matters arising from information in Volume B

Trustees noted the information in Volume B of their papers, were pleased with the information provided and there were no matters arising.

14. Next Board Meeting

Thursday 5 July 2018 at 09:30 in the Boardroom.

Minutes certified by Sir Charles Dunstone, Chairman Date

Following the meeting the Board inspected the new café and were pleased with the progress of the new caterer and its offer.

The Board then thanked the two Trustees who had given eight years public service as volunteers and whose second terms were now ending:

Eleanor Boddington for her committed role on the Audit Committee which she joined in 2012; her support and advice on the governance matters regarding *Cutty Sark*; her work on the Royal Museums Greenwich Foundation as elected Trustee; and the insights and passion she brought to the Museum as a local resident and mother of a young family.

Professor Chris Lintott for his highly effective championing of the ROG as an institution and its Astronomy team; his years on the Collections Research Committee, latterly as its Chair, in which his contribution to the wider maritime themes has been appreciated as much as his core subject; and his great work on the Astronomy Photographer of the Year competition – both as judge and MC for many years.