

**THE TRUSTEES OF THE NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM**

**THREE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY SECOND MEETING**

**10:00 THURSDAY 6 MAY 2021**

HELD REMOTELY BY VIDEO CONFERENCE DUE TO COVID-19 EPIDEMIC

**MINUTES**

**Trustees present:**

Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope Chair  
Joyce Bridges  
Dr Fiona Butcher  
Dr Helen Czerski  
Professor Julian Dowdeswell  
Alastair Marsh  
Jeremy Penn  
Eric Reynolds

**In attendance:**

Paddy Rodgers	Director, Royal Museums Greenwich
Kate Seeckts	Director, Development & Communications
Gail Symington	Director, Collections and Public Engagement
Chris Walker	Director, Finance and IT
Karen Eden-Tuxford	Head of Commerce & Visitor Experience
Jane Costantini	Governance and Museum Records Manager

***~Board Matters~***

- i. Update on the appointment of Trustees and Chair  
Trustees were advised that the DCMS Public Appointments team have recently informed us that the campaign is due to be launched shortly.

***~Governance Session~***

**1. Apologies**

Apologies received from Andy Bodle, Director, Operations

**2. Declaration of relevant interests related to this meeting**

None other than those previously registered.

**3. Draft Minutes of Board meeting 371 of 25 February 2021 and the extraordinary meeting of 15 March 2021**

The Board **agreed** the minutes to be a true record of the meetings. The Chair of the Board certified the minutes electronically after the meeting.

#### **4. Finance Update**

The Director, Finance & IT said that the draft 2020-21 statutory accounts projected broadly breakeven on General Reserves and we are expecting to complete the audit and final accounts before the summer recess.

The Director, Finance & IT reminded the Board that the previous forecast for 2021-22 was a substantial deficit and included ambitious targets for ticket income and 'in budget' fundraising. However, DCMS had just advised an award up to £3.64m in Covid support as an underwrite against shortfall in income. The details were complex and include a requirement to make 5% cost savings, a freeze on pay for all but the lowest paid, or in exceptional circumstances, and we are not permitted to put money in our reserves without consent from DCMS. The voluntary redundancy programme is likely to achieve between £0.5m and £0.8m savings per annum. We shall continue to review budgets as our self-generated income opportunities become clearer, but the DCMS underwrite will enable RMG to progress with a credible balanced budget for 2021/22.

Trustees were pleased to learn of the Covid support package from Government and were keen to understand the implications for Going Concern. The Director, Finance & IT stated that we ought to be in a stronger position this year as the auditors will have a greater understanding of the situation this year. Trustees recognised that attracting visitors from overseas in particular would be difficult for the coming year at least and so the financial situation would remain challenging. There were no further questions and Trustees thanked the Director, Finance & IT for his update.

#### **5. Director's Report**

The Director acknowledged the hard work and efforts of all staff during this year, in particular staff in the Estates team, the Front of House teams and in Human Resources, the latter providing well received communications, wellbeing and social activities for staff. As we turn our attention to re-opening, we should be alive to the fact that people have been through an exceptionally challenging year. On the whole, staff have been reasonably supportive of the handling of the voluntary redundancy programme and moving forward we want to ensure that all staff understand their role in the organisation. The Director concluded his report by reminding Trustees that we have a strong offer to the public on re-opening as most of our exhibitions have not yet been widely seen.

The Chair and Trustees thanked the Director and the Executive for their leadership over the past year. Trustees were also pleased that the challenges people had faced over the past few months were being recognised. The Board enquired as to the impact of the voluntary redundancy programme and the loss of experienced members of staff. The Director stated that he and the Executive were working through some reorganizational plans and would report back to the Board on this shortly.

#### **6. Letter from Secretary of State for DCMS**

The recent letter from the Secretary of State to the Chairman had been circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting. The Board agreed that in terms of the priorities mentioned we should be in a good position as we have close links

with other organisations across the country: National Maritime Museum, Cornwall; The Historic Dockyard, Chatham and with the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Portsmouth. The Director added that Andy Bodle's new role will involve developing new relationships with northern port cities.

## **7. Proposal for Cutty Sark Forum**

The Director advised Trustees of the proposal to change the Cutty Sark Committee into the Cutty Sark Forum, aiming to broaden its membership to include supporters and friends of the Cutty Sark who offer knowledge, expertise and networks, augmenting those of the Museum. The standing matters for the Forum would be: -

- The ship's continued maintenance, focusing on the longer term challenges and accessing the skills needed to maintain the ship
- The ship's story and research on her past and that of 'the clipper' with focus on the society that depended upon her crew, owners and trades
- How the ship influences the public perception of sailing, the Merchant Navy and global trade and the critical skills required for those particularly through collaboration with local history societies, the River community, sporting and heritage and the City of London Maritime Community
- Fund Raising and public awareness of the ship.

The Forum would not have responsibility for the ship but would take a keen interest in supporting and supplying information and advice to the RMG team. Matters of governance and finances would come to the full Trustee Board. The Chair invited comment to the proposal from the Board. Board members recognised that this would mark a step change in the management of the Cutty Sark since it came into the NMM collection in 2015 but were supportive of the change and the proposal was **approved** by the Board.

## **8. ORNC**

The Director briefed the Board that a small committee had been formed including two of our Trustees, Eric Reynolds and Dr Fiona Butcher, and two Trustees from the ORNC, with Peter Marsden from ORNC as Secretary. The committee have only met once so far but there is agreement from all concerned that the aim should be to encourage more visitors to come to the various constituent parts of the World Heritage Site and that currently there is a high degree of confusion amongst the public about what each site has to offer. The next meeting is scheduled shortly.

## **9. Re-opening the Museum**

The Head of Commerce and Visitor Experience advised Trustees that since 12 April when we were able to re-open our grounds, shops, cafes and the Library, we have been working hard to encourage people back on site and preparing for the full re-opening all our sites on 17 May. We are targeting local audiences and families, creating family friendly demonstrations and talks. We are also launching new audio tours for the Cutty Sark and Royal Observatory (north) using a new app, meaning that we no longer need to supply equipment which was difficult to maintain, to secure and unusable since Covid-19 due to hygiene controls. Visitors are still being encouraged to book online in advance of their visit and we are still maintaining limited capacities in line with social distancing measures.

From August our Front of House teams will be wearing new uniforms which will be less formal in style and more sustainably sourced.

The Director, Development and Communications informed Trustees of the recent Membership Comeback Campaign which had managed to re-engage around a third of those lapsed Members contacted so far.

The Director of Collections and Public Engagement stated that our current priorities were to raise awareness of our offer and re-build trust with the emphasis on having fun and making the transition over the summer from a largely digital offer to greater on site activity. Various activities are planned for outside over the summer in the *Museum Inside Out* programme. Our exhibitions offer remains strong with *Faces of a Queen* and *Woburn Treasures* in the Queen's House, *Exposure: Lives at Sea, IIAPY* and *Tudors to Windsors* opening late May. On events, the Director, Development and Communications said that 40 weddings are booked for this year, many postponed from 2020. The Dining Domes had been installed on our front lawns and were proving very popular. Trustees asked whether our admission prices should be revisited for the domestic visitor. The Director said that we would be constantly keeping visitor numbers and pricing under review, with perhaps opportunities for offers over the summer holidays. There were no further questions and the Trustees thanked all concerned for the work done.

#### **10. Estates update**

In the absence of the Director, Operations, the Director, Finance and IT presented a series of images of work done across the estate over the last year, much of it during lockdowns and all in accordance with Covid-19 safe working guidelines. Much work has been done to replace pipework and progress work on longstanding leaks and damp issues. Trustees were keen to know if energy efficiency was at the forefront of minds when work was being done. The Director stated that whilst it was, there were undoubtedly opportunities for further development in this area and we will bring this subject back for discussion at a future Board meeting.

#### **11. Preparations for new Board members**

Trustees had been asked prior to the meeting to consider what, if anything, we should change in terms of our induction process to welcome our new Trustees this autumn. Trustees agreed that the content of the induction programme had been excellent, but that it does take time for new Trustees to settle in, which, if one term appointments are going to become the norm, could prove challenging. Some suggestions to consider were: more opportunities for Trustees to meet each other informally outside of the meetings, meeting former/recently retired Trustees to understand the issues and background to matters, ensuring that Trustees felt comfortable enough in meetings to ask questions. Trustees were keen that wherever possible new appointments should be staggered so that there is continuity, with a mixture of experience on the Board at all times. It was agreed that the Governance Manager should prepare a short paper for Trustees to review the induction plans at the next meeting.

#### **12. Trustee Diary**

It was agreed that the July meeting should be held in person if possible and that in future meetings would be a combination of attendance in person and virtual for

those unable to be come to the Museum. It was likely that there would be a lunch for recently retired Trustees on the day of the November meeting and that the annual Trustees/Staff event should also take place on the evening of 18 November, providing risks from the pandemic continue to recede.

**13. Matters arising from the information in Volume B/AOB**

There were no issues arising from Volume B.

There were no further matters raised and the meeting concluded.

Minutes certified by Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, Chair

8.7.2021