

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of the Meeting on 8 October 2014 at the Royal York Hotel

Present:

Dr Gill Samuels (Chairman)
Lady Chisholm
Mr Howard Covington
Lord Faulkner of Worcester
Mr Andreas Goss
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Mr Simon Linnett
Professor Averil Macdonald
Sir Howard Newby
Mr James Smith
Lord Grade of Yarmouth

In Attendance:

Mr Ian Blatchford	Director, Science Museum Group (SMG)
Ms Alex Burch	Director of Learning
Ms Jane Ellis	Finance Director, SMG
Mrs Susan Fisher	Director of Development
Ms Jean Franczyk	Deputy Director, Science Museum
Dr Roger Highfield	Director of External Affairs, SMG
Mr Paul Kirkman	Director, National Railway Museum
Ms Karen Livingstone	Director of Masterplan & Estates
Ms Sally MacDonald	Director, MOSI
Ms Adele McAllister	Director of HR
Ms Judith McNicol	Change Director
Mr Jonathan Newby	Chief Operating Officer, SMG
Ms E Helen Jones	Head of Strategy & Planning

Apologies: Professor Dame Athene Donald; Mr Chris Swinson; Ms Jo Quinton-Tulloch

Declaration of Interests: None

ACTION

BT 14/10 1 Draft minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

- 1.1 a) *Draft minutes of Board meeting on 26 June 2014*
b) *Draft minutes of extraordinary Board meeting on 8 July 2014*
The minutes of the meetings were approved. There were no matters arising.

BT 14/10 2 SMG Director's Update

- 2.1 a) *Director's Report, September 2014*
The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In addition:
- Her Majesty The Queen was to open the *Information Age* gallery on 24 October;
 - Funding applications were being submitted for a new temporary exhibitions space at MOSI. Manchester being European City of Science in 2016 was an advantage. It was suggested that the Regional Growth Fund could be a funding source and the Director would make contact.
 - Following the allocation of £1 million each to NMeM by SMG and Bradford City Metropolitan District Council (BCMDC), funding was also being sought from DCMS for a specific capital project.
 - Several major funding applications were being submitted for the Medicine Galleries. The next tier of funders was to be identified.
 - Board members expressed support for the SMG position regarding continued negotiation on the sale of the PO Building.
 - It had been tentatively suggested the Museum might be advanced its share of the proceeds of the anticipated sale Blythe House in order that construction of a new store could begin, with the advance protected if the sale did not proceed. In principle, **the Board agreed** to such an arrangement.
- 2.2 In discussion, it was confirmed that the planning decision on the solar farm at Wroughton was for the Planning Minister; it might slip into 2015. The findings of the inspection report would be key.

IB

2.3 *b) Cosmonauts briefing*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The catalogue was tabled, demonstrating the quality and power of the objects. It should be known by the end of October whether or not contractual issues could be resolved, allowing the exhibition to proceed. In any case opening would have to be postponed to spring 2015.

- 2.4 There was a detailed discussion of the pros and cons of proceeding, even if the diplomatic and logistical issues were resolved, both regarding this project and the generic issues it exposed. A large majority of the Board was in favour of proceeding, based on i) the fact that the Museum focused on a fascinating historic story of science and technical achievement, and should be a place for debate; ii) the fact that there was strong support from UK government bodies, despite the downplaying of the UK-Russia Year of Culture; and iii) SMG credibility could be more damaged by calling off the project unilaterally. Nevertheless, the political situation would be kept under review and careful consideration given to communications. The topic would be the subject of future discussion by the Board.

BT 14/10 3 Reports from Museum Advisory Boards Chairmen and Directors

3.1 *a) National Railway Museum*

The main topics of discussion had been the NRM Masterplan and the York Central project. These had been covered during the Board's tour of NRM prior to the meeting.

- 3.2 The minutes of the meeting of the NRM Advisory Board on 4 June 2014 had been circulated previously and were noted.

3.3 *b) National Media Museum*

The BCMDC funding and completion of the cinema operation outsourcing were good news and the NMeM Advisory Board was excited by the new vision for the Museum. Care should be taken, though, to avert a sense that everything was now 'all right' at NMeM when there was still a great deal of work to do and additional funding was still required.

3.4 *c) Museum of Science & Industry*

- If successfully funded, the new temporary exhibition gallery would have a transformative impact on the MOSI site and offer;
- Collider had attracted over 15,000 paid visits, more than one third up on expectations;
- *Graphene* would be the subject of a major exhibition from June 2015 and the eminent studio, rAndom International had won the commission for the featured artwork.
- MOSI was to lead the Science in the City strand of the EU City of Science and was in discussion with Manchester City Council.

3.5 *d) Science Museum*

- At the forthcoming meeting, the programme of temporary exhibitions post 2017 would be discussed, and there was an ambition to align it more explicitly with the Masterplan;
- The Museum was collaborating with the Royal Society and Wellcome Trust on a scoping study for a putative new science festival for London.
- Masterplan priorities were the Medicine Galleries, the Maths Project and the new interactive gallery.

BT 14/10 4 SMG Masterplans

- 4.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

- 4.2 The submission of the three funding applications described in the paper were **approved**

BT 14/10 5 Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board

5.1 *a) Railway Heritage Designation Recommendations*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted..

- 5.2 The recommendations regarding designation and disposals were **approved**

- 5.3 The recommendation that GB Railfreight Ltd and Hitachi Rail UK come voluntarily within scope of the statutory designation powers was also **approved**.

5.4 *b) Minutes of the meeting*

Minutes of the meeting of the Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board on 18 July 2014 had been circulated previously and were noted.

BT 14/10 6 Reports from SMG Advisory Board and Committees

6.1 The minutes of meetings had been circulated where available and were noted. Only additional points or key points from oral reports are noted below.

6.2 *a) Collections & Research Committee*

The big issue was the new Research Centre at the Science Museum. It would be a 'game-changer' for SMG research and the opportunities it afforded should be maximised. It would be on the agenda for the next SMG Board meeting.

LJ (HJ)

6.3 *b) Finance & Strategy Committee*

- SCMGGE profit forecast was somewhat reduced – attributable to not being able to reach agreement with a York Wheel supplier– but up on the previous year.
- Major financial decision-making processes needed to be reviewed regarding project funding and SMG underwriting of project fundraising.
- Although good progress was being made towards the savings target, there were some elements that had been delayed or for which detailed planning had yet to be agreed.
- The Committee aimed to link project approvals more explicitly to SMG strategy in future.

6.4 *c) Audit Committee*

- At its previous meeting the Board had recommended that the Audit Committee approve the SMG Annual Report & Accounts 2013/14; this had been done. No issues had been raised and the audit year was complete.
- The internal audit programme had been approved.
- Improved infrastructure for corporate risk management was being introduced.
- In discussion, it was confirmed that good financial data was supplied to the Finance & Strategy Committee.

Next meeting: Wed 3 December, 15.00-18.00, Science Museum

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