

**BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of the Meeting on 4 March 2015 at the Science Museum**

Present:

Dame Mary Archer (Chairman)
Dr Gill Samuels
Mr Howard Covington
Dame Athene Donald
Lord Faulkner of Worcester
Mr Andreas Goss
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Mr Simon Linnett
Professor Averil Macdonald

In Attendance:

Mr Ian Blatchford	Director, Science Museum Group (SMG)
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 Sally MacDonald	Director, MOSI
Mr Jonathan Newby	Chief Operating Officer, SMG
Ms Jo Quinton-Tulloch	Director of NMeM
Ms E Helen Jones	Head of Strategy & Planning
Mr Hadrian Ellory-van Dekker	Head of Collections (item 9)

BT 15/03 1 Apologies and declarations

- 1.1 *Apologies:* Lord Grade of Yarmouth
1.2 *Declaration of interests:* Interests were declared at items 5.2 and 5.5.

ACTION

BT 15/03 2 Draft minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

- 2.1 The minutes of the meeting on 8 October were approved, subject to amendments at items 7.1 and 8.2.
2.2 Matters arising:
- Item 2.3 – **It was agreed** that SMG should advocate more actively among opposition parties as well as the current government. **IB**
 - Item 3.2 – GS, in her capacity as Deputy Chairman with a particular interest in MoSI, the NRM and NMeM, would consult with the Directors and Advisory Board Chairmen of those Museums and produce a discussion paper for the next Board meeting. This would cover the potential for making the most of being a Group with a strong presence in the north of England. **GS**

BT 15/03 3 Chairman's business

- 3.1 *a) Chairman's priorities*
The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The Chairman thanked fellow Trustees and SMG staff for their welcome and support and added the following comments:
- An announcement on Trustee re-appointments and new appointments was expected very soon. Arrangements were being made for an induction programme, which would be made available to all Trustees;
 - GS's paper (1.2) would inform a more general review and consolidation of SMG strategy, which included the aim of 'nudging the centre of gravity northwards'.
- 3.2 *b) Changes to SMG Board Sub-committees*
The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In addition:
- It was proposed that a fourth business meeting of the Board be held on the afternoon of 6 October 2015, preceding the annual Strategy Day, and that these both take place in Manchester.
 - Further changes to the terms of reference for Museum Advisory Boards had been proposed: that new non-Trustee members be appointed for terms of four years; that a maximum of two terms would normally apply; that there was no need for Deputy Chairmen of Advisory Boards; and that wording be added to clarify expectations regarding regular attendance.

3.3 **The Board approved** all the recommendations made in the paper and the additional proposals mentioned in the meeting. **ACTION**

3.4 *c) Fellowship Nominations*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. **The Board approved** the recommendations on the fellowship nominations process, and emphasised that due consideration must be given to diversity. Suggestions for Fellowship recipients were invited, to be sent to SF by 18 March 2015. **All**

BT 15/03 4 SMG Director's Update

4.1 *a) Director's Report, February 2014*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In addition:

- IB had just returned from a visit to Shanghai and noted that there were potential opportunities for SMG, especially MoSI, in China;
- An announcement on funding for a pilot STEM learning programme in Bradford and Manchester was anticipated within the next week or so;
- The Government Chief Scientist was proving a good advocate for SMG;
- *Engineer your Future* continued to do well, with more than 100,000 visits to date, and consideration was being given to how its reach could be extended;
- In light of the growing links with the BBC, it was agreed that the Chairman and SMG Director should meet the Director General;
- The sale of Blythe House by DCMS would not be included in the March 2015 Budget, but would be considered in the post-election Spending Review.
- By the end of April 2015, the outcome of Leicester City Council's bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a new railway museum would be known. NRM was a partner in the project and would be providing locomotives and other items;
- Restoration of the *Flying Scotsman* was on schedule and its inaugural run and presentation at NRM were being planned for early 2016;
- The Collections & Research Committee would seek approval for revised collecting at the next Board meeting.

MA, IB

4.2 In discussion:

- **It was agreed** that a paper would be brought to the next Board meeting on how the income from sale of the Post Office Block would be used;
- Senior personnel remained optimistic that the Blythe House sale project would proceed. It afforded major opportunities to make collections more accessible via new display – including, potentially, in Shildon – and digitisation (subject to additional funding), as well as enabling vital improvements in collections storage and management;
- It was suggested that NMeM consider itself part of a wider catchment than Bradford alone as there were potentially useful links to be made with other local universities and museums, e.g. in Leeds.
- **It was agreed** that Board needed to better understand the National Coal Mining Museum for England and its relationship with SMG; a paper would be brought to a future Board meeting.

JN

JN

4.3 *b) Cosmonauts Exhibition*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. It was commended as an exemplary way to approach potentially controversial issues and demonstrated a robust approach to risk. **It was agreed** that a communications timetable would be circulated.

RH

4.4 *c) SMG Health and Safety Report*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

BT 15/03 5 Financial Business

5.1 *a) SMG Management Accounts at 31 December 2014*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The year-to-date surplus arose from delays in expenditure and budgeting for more activity than proved achievable, and the need for better budgeting was acknowledged.

5.2 *b) Cash Flow Forecast, Reserves and SM Foundation Grant*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

- The cash flow charts that showed a net cash outflow were indicative only, being based on certain assumptions that could be summarised as maintaining spending levels against decreasing income. In fact, good planning would mitigate such a scenario, and was essential.
- The Board was required to review SMG's Reserves policy annually. **The Board approved** the Finance & Strategy Committee (F&SC) recommendation that Reserves be maintained at £1.5 million.
- HC, as a Trustee of the SM Foundation, did not participate in this part of the item. In order to maintain Reserves at £1.5 million, **the Board approved** the payment of any operating surplus over that amount as a grant to the SM Foundation.

[SF left the meeting during the following item]

5.3 *c) Finance & Strategy Committee*

A paper was tabled requesting approval for an uplift to the budget for the new Interactive Gallery project, on F&SC recommendation. The request arose because the original budget had been drawn up very quickly in order to meet a tight deadline for applying for DCMS loan funding. The vision and ambition for the gallery had been refined through a stringent design and development process which identified the need for additional funding; the selected scheme was not the most expensive of those considered. A Trustee who had seen the plans stressed that the designs were excellent and would mark a step-change in interactive galleries.

5.4 **The Board approved** the increase in the Interactive Gallery project budget.

5.5 *d) SMG Development Report*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. LJ declared that a family member worked for one of the companies that was in discussion with SMG over financial support for the new SM Maths Gallery.

5.6 *e) Audit Committee*

The Committee had considered the risk to Museum objects from staging corporate events. Also, an internal audit had uncovered some failings in object location records. This, and the poor state of some collections storage facilities, meant that collections management and storage represented a high risk for SMG. Jack Kirby, Head of Collections at MoSI, was to be seconded to a Group-wide role to recommend improvements by treating the collections as a single, integrated entity.

BT 15/03 6 SMG Annual Plan 2015/166.1 *a) SMG Budget 2015/16*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The budget for 2015/16 was balanced, assuming no further in-year cuts in Grant-in-Aid (GIA). GIA cuts were anticipated in subsequent years; an assumed a decrease of 5 % p.a. led to the budget showing a structural deficit of £4.5 million by 2017/18.

6.2 GIA cuts of more than 5% would be very difficult to deal with. Further review of budgets and planning would be necessary in light of the forthcoming 2015 Spending Review. With the General Election and Spending Review in mind, SMG was stressing its position within the UK science base and increasingly engaging directly with Treasury.

6.3 **The Board approved** the SMG budget 2015/16.

6.4 *b) SMG Priorities 2015/16*

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. Subject to correcting the NM&M mission on p 11, **the Board approved** the SMG Plan 2015/16.

BT 15/03 7 Risk Management Strategy & Policy

7.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. **The Board approved** the SMG Risk Management Strategy & Policy.

BT 15/03 8 National Media Museum – next steps

ACTION

- 8.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. Views were sought on three proposals that continued the re-visioning of NMeM that had been started around 18 months before. These covered the remit of the collections narrative, the name of the Museum and rationalising the collections in terms of location, access and costs.
- 8.2 In discussion:
- It was noted that the Chairman of the NMeM Advisory Board, Lord Grade, supported the proposals, and several Trustees also commended the paper;
 - The suggested name made no reference to the Museum’s content, nor ‘National’ status, but the SM name had the potential to attract significant funding and was flexible enough to cover a range of topics. Local consultation was essential;
 - The collections moves might be seen as removing the ‘best’ part from Bradford to London, but also offered opportunities to shine a light on equally important, but less well-known, elements;
 - The relationship of a new photographic ‘reading room’ in London to the Dana Library & Research Centre would need to be clear;
 - NMeM was on target to achieve its operational savings target; SMG had allocated £1 million for the new interactive gallery and had plans for sourcing a further £0.5 million. The reading room proposal had not yet been costed.
- 8.3 **The Board approved:**
- The evolution of the collection narrative from ‘the still and moving image’ to encompass the science/technology of ‘light and sound’; and
 - Consultation with key partners on the proposed new name.
- 8.4 **It was agreed** that costed proposals for rationalising the collections as described in the paper be brought to the July Board meeting.

JQT

[HEvD joined the meeting for the item 9 only]

BT 15/03 9 Board of Survey Recommendations

- 9.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The recommendations of the Collections & Research Committee were **approved**.

BT 15/03 10 Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board Recommendations

- 10.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The recommendations were **approved**.

BT 15/03 11 Any other business - None

Next meeting: Wednesday 1 July 2015, 16.00-19.00, Science Museum

---- ENDS ----