

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of the Meeting on 6 October 2015 at the Great Victoria Hotel, Bradford

Present:

Dame Mary Archer (Chairman)
Lord Faulkner of Worcester
Ms Sharon Flood
Mr Andreas Goss (from item 7)
Lord Grade of Yarmouth
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Mr Simon Linnett
Professor David Phoenix
Mr Anton Valk
Mr David Willetts
Dame Fiona Woolf

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, NRM
Ms Karen Livingstone	Director of Masterplan and Estate
Ms Sally MacDonald	Director, MOSI
Mr Jonathan Newby	Chief Operating Officer, SMG
Ms Jo Quinton-Tulloch	Director of NMeM
Ms Helen Jones	Head of Strategy & Planning (Secretary)
Mr Jack Kirby	Group Head of Collections Services (items 8 and 9)
Mr John Stack	Digital Director (items 8 and 9)

BT 15/10 1 Apologies for absence

ACTION

- 1.1 Mr Howard Covington, Mr Matthew d’Ancona, Dame Athene Donald, Professor Russell Foster, Professor Averil Macdonald

BT 15/10 2 Declarations of interests - None

BT 15/10 3 Draft minutes of previous meetings and matters arising

- 3.1 The minutes of the meetings on 1 July 2015 were approved.
- 3.2 Matters arising: All actions had been completed, were on the present agenda or were due to be addressed at a future Board meeting.
- 3.3 *Item 5.1a* - Regarding *Cosmonauts* attendances and ticketing, it was confirmed that ticket sales were on target and that 3rd party sales and special offers were to launch soon. The exhibition shop was performing well. It was suggested that variable ticket pricing be considered for future exhibitions.
- 3.4 *Item 5.4d* - The Director of the National Coal Mining Museum for England (NCMME) had resigned and recruitment for an interim Director had been initiated. There was discussion of the status of NCMME and the impact of the severe budget cuts anticipated in the Comprehensive Spending Review. **It was agreed** that talks with DCMS start immediately; in future a small working group of SMG Trustees may need to be convened, and a paper would be brought to the Board at the appropriate time.
- 3.5 *Item 7.2* - There was to be one more Masterplan tour of the Science Museum which Trustees could join.

IB/JN

BT 15/10 4 Chairman’s business

- 4.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The table of committee memberships was incomplete and a full version was tabled. In addition, the following people were congratulated:
- David Willetts on becoming Chair of the British Science Association;
 - Russell Foster on the award of the Feldberg Foundation prize for promoting Anglo-German friendship in biomedical science;
 - Ian Blatchford on the award of the Pushkin Medal which recognises achievement in the arts and culture, education, humanities and literature – in this case the *Cosmonauts* exhibition.

- 4.2 Richard Faulkner was thanked for taking on the role of Deputy Chairman, in which capacity he had elected to follow the former Deputy Chairman's precedent and take particular interest in SMG's northern museums.
- 4.3 A new round of Board recruitment was planned, with new Trustees to be in place for April 2016. The required characteristics included representation outside London, and expertise in digital and in museums and collections. Suggestions for potential candidates were to be sent to the Board Chairman or Secretary.

BT 15/10 5 Director's Report

- 5.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In addition:
- The NRM was a major partner in a new rail attraction planned for Leicester for which a bid for £10 million had been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund; a Stage 1 pass had been granted;
 - The SMG Chairman, with RF and PK, had had the opportunity to speak to Nicky Morgan, Education Secretary, at a rail event;
 - It was confirmed that funding towards the new interactive gallery should be announced soon. Martin Smith was thanked for the help he had provided here;
 - It was confirmed that the Clockmakers' Museum collection was covered by Government Indemnity;
 - Briefing sessions on the Medicine Galleries could be organised for Trustees;
 - The proposed new 'interim gallery' (anticipated lifespan of 5-10 years) on flight would only proceed if externally funded;
 - A paper would be brought to a future Board meeting about the proposed new Agriculture Gallery. It was important to align with wider government agendas and Trustees' help in identifying contacts was requested;
 - Collaboration with the Royal Society was going well and SMG would engage with the incoming President.
- 5.2 In discussion it was acknowledged that, whilst the *Cosmonauts* exhibition launch events had been tremendously successful, there were some logistical lessons to be learned. The Executive was reminded that Trustees were keen to be deployed at events at all SMG sites, and that as much notice as possible should be given of dates.

IB/JF

BT 15/10 6 Financial business

- 6.1 a) *SMG Management Accounts*
The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. It was emphasised that the budget deficit shown at year-end was planned-for and the consequence of the format of the accounts.
- 6.2 In future reports, sources of Development income would be shown more clearly.
- 6.3 b) *Finance Committee: Investment Policy Statement*
The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In discussion:
- SFd, as Chairman of the SMG Finance Committee, would aim to attend meetings of the Science Museum Foundation Investment Committee;
 - The investment advisers to the Science Museum Foundation had been engaged for a one-off piece of work and if SMG wished to use their services it would be via a separate, direct agreement;
 - The wording of item 6.1 of the draft Investment Policy Statement was to be amended to omit the first clause: "The trustees.....however";
 - It was hoped that the financial freedoms piloted by DCMS would continue, but it was stressed that the Foundation would continue in any case as it was invaluable for fundraising.
- 6.4 Subject to the amendment above, the Investment Policy Statement was **approved**. It was **agreed** that the Board should review the SMG Ethics Policy at its meeting in December 2015.

SF/JE

JE

HJ

A Goss joined the meeting during the following item

BT 15/10 7 Masterplan and Estate (6/10/15)

- 7.1 The papers that had been circulated previously were noted. There was discussion of procedure for approving increases in project budgets (must be reported to the Finance Committee) and allowing a small margin of flexibility when approving delegated authority for expenditure.
- 7.2 The recommended delegation of authority was **approved**: The Masterplan and Estate Committee may let the Interactive Gallery contract to a value of £2.7 million +/- 10%, with any increase in excess of 10% to revert to Board approval.

FW/KL

J Stack and J Kirby joined the meeting

BT 15/10 8 SMG Digital Strategy

- 8.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.
- 8.2 In discussion:
 - The importance of digital was emphasised and the paper commended;
 - SMG was in discussion with the BBC on several projects, and needed to be ready to act on opportunities, but did not need to rely on the BBC. SMG would seek out other partners and adopt a more permissive approach to non-commercial use of digital assets;
 - The Digital team comprised 16 posts and a new role of Digital Editor was to be appointed. This role would oversee all content, and liaise with SMG's specialists to ensure their expertise was expressed digitally;
 - Delivering on digital was the responsibility of all SMG and required a major culture shift, but there was an appetite for change;
 - The Digital Strategy rightly emphasised the visitor experience. In order to make significant improvement, SMG needed to integrate data on visitors and use it in decision-making, to enable individualisation, to layer information more effectively and to consider digital at the outset of all projects.
- 8.3 The Board requested assurance about the pathway for implementing the SMG Digital Strategy, and costs. There would be a series of projects, costed and approved via the normal processes. A lot of digital assets already existed. £0.5 million had been earmarked for digital in each of 2016/17 and 2017/18, and additional external support was being sought.
- 8.4 The SMG Digital Strategy was **approved**.

BT 15/10 9 Collections Services Strategy

- 9.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.
- 9.2 The Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee (A&RC) assured the Board that a way to resolve the issue of not-in-place collections items, and to monitor progress, had been agreed. Additionally, **it was agreed** that the matter would be reported regularly to the Board via the Director's Report.
- 9.3 In discussion:
 - The Digital Strategy would be important in delivering aspects of the Collections Services Strategy;
 - The Collections Services Strategy aimed to address historic underinvestment; the need for transparency and realism regarding actions and resources was emphasised. If additional investment could accelerate progress, a case should be made to the Finance Committee and Board;
 - De-accessioning and disposal of collections items (in accordance with relevant statutory and professional codes) was as important as collecting;
 - A proportion of the proceeds from the sale of the Post Office Building was allocated to improving collections storage.
- 9.4 Collecting policy was not within the remit of the Collections Services Strategy, and would be on the agenda of a future Board meeting, but there was general agreement on the principles of being more integrated and strategic across SMG.
- 9.5 The Collections Services Strategy was **approved**.

IB/SM

J Stack and J Kirby left the meeting

- BT 15/10 10 SMG Strategic Risk Register**
- 10.1 The papers that had been circulated previously were noted. The purpose was to encourage horizon-scanning by the Board and provide assurance that the Executive was addressing the right issues. Operational risk was addressed by the Audit & Risk Committee.
- 10.2 Discussion of the strategic risks themselves was postponed to the Board Strategy Day on the following day. **It was agreed** that strategic risk be discussed annually as part of the Board Strategy Day. **MA/JE**
- 10.3 **It was agreed** that when the SMG budget was submitted to the Board, investment in areas of high strategic risk would be identified, with rationale. **JE**
- BT 15/10 11 SMG Acquisition Fund**
- 11.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.
- 11.2 **It was agreed** that an acquisition fund should be further investigated. **SF**
- BT 15/10 12 Wellcome Wolfson Building sub-committee**
- 12.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted and the recommendation to dissolve the Wellcome Wolfson Building Trustee sub-committee was **approved**.
- BT 15/10 13 Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board Recommendations**
- 13.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The recommendations were **approved**.
- BT 15/10 14 Minutes of sub-committee meetings**
- 14.1 The papers that had been circulated previously were noted.
- BT 15/10 15 Any other business - None**

Next meeting: Wednesday 2 December 2015, Science Museum

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