

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 20 NOVEMBER 2019 AT THE  
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH**

**Present:**

Mr Bruce Minto	Chairman
Ms Ann Allen	Trustee
Prof Mary Bownes	Trustee
Mr Gordon Drummond	Trustee
Mr Christopher Fletcher	Trustee
Dr Brian Lang	Trustee
Mr Ian Russell	Trustee
Ms Jandy Stevenson	Trustee
Ms Eilidh Wiseman	Trustee
Dr Laura Young	Trustee

**In Attendance:**

Dr Gordon Rintoul (GR)	NMS Director
Mr Keith Pentland (KP)	Director of Finance & Planning
Ms Julie Brown (JB)	Head of Corporate Policy & Performance
Mr Xerxes Mazda (XM)	Director of Collections (for Item 7 & 11)
Ms Fiona Stewart (FS)	Director of Estates & Facilities (for Item 8)
Ms Ruth Gill (RG)	Director of Public Programmes (for Item 9 & 10)
Mr Stephen Allen (SA)	Head of Learning & Programmes (for Item 10)

**Apologies:**

Mr Adam Bruce	Trustee
Ms Lynda Logan	Trustee
Dr Catriona Macdonald	Trustee

**PRELIMINARIES**

The Chairman reported that Scottish Government would be advertising for his successor on 28 November, with a closing date of 10 January and interviews taking place in February.

**ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies were received from Adam Bruce, Lynda Logan and Catriona Macdonald.

**ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 SEPTEMBER 2019**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 18 September 2019 were approved.

**ACTION**

**ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING**

3.1 Matters arising from the last meeting were taken under the main agenda items.

**ITEM 4 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

4.1 It was noted that there were no declarations of interests from Board members in relation to the substantive items on the agenda.

**ITEM 5 – DIRECTOR’S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES** **NMS (2019) 44**

5.1 The Director presented his report which had been circulated. He gave a verbal update on visitor numbers at the mid-year point and highlighted figures from VisitScotland which showed a significant drop in international visitors to Scotland, especially from the EU.

5.2 There was a short discussion regarding the Chairman and Director’s forthcoming annual meeting with the Cabinet Secretary. Trustees were agreed that funding for essential estate maintenance was a pressing matter, particularly given the Board’s statutory duty to care for the national collections.

**ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT** **NMS (2019) 45**

6.1 Keith Pentland presented his report which had been circulated. The Board of Trustees noted that:

- It was expected the accounts would show a balanced position for 2019/20.
- NMS was currently showing a surplus which was largely timing-related, and NMSE Ltd was performing well and ahead of budget.
- Overall, we were forecasting a shortfall in one area but this would be offset by additional income in other areas and reductions in operational expenditure.

6.2 Keith Pentland highlighted the forthcoming general election and the likely delay in the Scottish Budget 2020/21 announcement. This would mean public bodies not receiving confirmation regarding their 2020/21 funding until the end of January 2020 and potentially later than that.

**ITEM 7 – REQUESTS FOR TRANSFER OF OBJECTS  
OUTWITH THE UK** **NMS (2019) 46**

7.1 Xerxes Mazda joined the meeting and presented the paper which had been circulated.

7.2 Following an extensive discussion, it was agreed that further consideration would be given to this matter.

**XM**

**ITEM 8 – GRANTON STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK AND  
MASTERPLAN** **NMS (2019) 47**

8.1 Fiona Stewart confirmed that City of Edinburgh Council (CEC) was in the process of finalising a Strategic Framework for Granton, an area of regeneration for the City, and gave an overview of the guiding principles for future

development as set out in the Framework. National Museums Scotland, as one of the partners in this project, was now being asked to agree the Framework and continued involvement.

8.2 Trustees recognised the importance of the regeneration plans for Granton. Following clarification regarding one or two points, the Board noted the progress on the CEC-led Strategic Framework for Granton and confirmed that our organisation would support it and continue to be part of it.

**ITEM 9 – EXHIBITIONS & TOURING STRATEGY: NMS (2019) 48**  
**PROGRESS UPDATE**

9.1 Ruth Gill joined the meeting and presented the annual update on the Exhibitions & Touring Strategy 2015-2020 which had been circulated.

9.2 The Board of Trustees noted the progress made, and touched on the some of the opportunities and challenges to be considered as part of the development of the Strategy for the next planning period.

RG

**ITEM 10 – LEARNING & PROGRAMMES STRATEGY: NMS (2019) 49**  
**PROGRESS UPDATE**

10.1 Stephen Allen joined the meeting and, with Ruth Gill, presented the update on the Learning & Programmes Strategy 2015-20 which had been circulated.

10.2 The Board noted the progress outlined in the report, and commended the breadth and range of the activities offered to the public.

10.3 S Allen highlighted the planned key themes for the forthcoming Strategy currently in development for the next planning period.

RG, SA

**ITEM 11 – COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH REPORT NMS (2019) 50**

11.1 The Board of Trustees noted the Collections and Research Report, and extended their thanks and appreciation to Xerxes Mazda for the presentations earlier in the day on:

- Modernist textiles and the Art Fund new collecting award (with Lisa Mason, Assistant Curator, Modern & Contemporary Design); and
- The acquisition of a digital displacement pump (with Ellie Swinbank, Curator, Technology).

**ITEM 12 – REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

**(i) Acquisitions Committee**

12.1 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Acquisitions Committee meeting held on 17 September 2019 had been circulated.

**(ii) Personnel & Remuneration Committee**

12.2 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Personnel & Remuneration Committee meeting held on 18 September 2019 had been circulated.

12.3 Eilidh Wiseman (Chairman of the Personnel & Remuneration Committee) gave a verbal report on the discussions regarding the 2019/20 staff pay award at the Committee's meeting held on 23 October 2019, and on the detail of the subsequent implementation of the pay offer with effect from 01 April 2019.

12.4 Eilidh Wiseman also highlighted the recent, positive meeting of the Committee and our Trade Union representatives.

**(iii) National Museums Scotland Enterprises Ltd Board**

12.5 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the NMSE Ltd Board meeting held on 11 October 2019 had been circulated.

12.6 Gordon Drummond (Chairman of the NMS Enterprises Ltd Board) gave a verbal report on key issues arising since the meeting and confirmed that NMSE Ltd was currently on track to be above the planned budget at year-end.

**(iv) Estates Committee**

12.7 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 23 October 2019 had been circulated.

12.8 Ann Allen, (Chairman of the Estates Committee) reported on matters arising since the meeting. She also confirmed that the Committee had already started discussions regarding estate maintenance expenditure and that dialogue had commenced with the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee about associated risks (ref. minute item 5.2 above).

**(v) Finance Committee**

12.9 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 28 October 2019 had been circulated.

**(vi) Audit & Risk Committee**

12.10 Ian Russell (Chairman of the Audit & Risk Committee) reported on the key issues arising from the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 04 November.

12.11 He also reported on the recent risk workshop involving our internal auditors and Executive Team to develop the organisation's new Risk Register.

**ITEM 13 – FORWARD PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS**

**NMS (2019) 51**

13.1 The Board noted the Forward Programme of Business.

**ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

14.1 There was nothing to report.

**ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

15.1 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 05 February 2020.