

**THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM  
TRUSTEES' AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

**62<sup>nd</sup> Meeting on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> October 2013**

**Present**

Sir David Omand in the Chair  
Dr Derek Langslow  
Mark Richardson (co-opted member)

**In Attendance**

Dr Michael Dixon (Director)  
Neil Greenwood (Director of Finance & Corporate Services)  
Jan Day (Head of Risk & Assurance/Committee Secretary)  
Lewis Knights (Audit Manager, National Audit Office)

Ailsa Barry (Head of Content) was in attendance for items 12 and 13.

***ACTION***

The Chair observed that this was his last Audit & Risk Committee meeting. It was with regret and great sadness that his term of office as a trustee of the Natural History Museum was coming to an end on 19<sup>th</sup> January 2014. The Chair asked that his thanks to the Museum Director, the Director's team, the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and the Head of Risk & Assurance was recorded in the Minutes. The Museum Director responded that the Senior Management Team (SMT), Committee members and all the NHM staff wished to thank the Chair for the enormous contribution he had made to the Audit & Risk Committee and the Museum.

It was noted that the Chair of the Board was to seek Board of Trustees' formal approval at their next meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 for the appointment of a new Chair for the Audit & Risk Committee.

**1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- 1.1 Oliver Stocken (Chair of Trustees), Professor Sir Roy Anderson, Keith Lloyd (Director NAO) and Nick Buxton (Partner, BDO) sent their apologies.

## **ACTION**

### **2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 2.1 Mark Richardson (co-opted member) declared an on-going interest in any discussions relating to donations to the Natural History Museum Development Trust (NHMDT). This was due to his role as a trustee of the Development Trust.

### **3 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2013 (PAPER TAC 29/2013)**

- 3.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

- 4.1 There were no matters arising.

### **5 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (PAPER TAC 30/2013)**

- 5.1 The Director presented his paper.

- 5.2 Accidental Destruction of Financial Records - Due to human error at the Museum financial records which were required to be held for seven years had been destroyed by Iron Mountain a secure storage company. All the destroyed records had been audited. The 2012/2013 financial records were currently being archived. A report on the investigation of the incident had been finalised. The process was to be improved and a third level of sign-off was under consideration. The most significant concern was the external audit of EU grants. Although the Research & Consulting Office kept copies of all the financial records relating to EU grants, EU auditors normally required originals. In 2006, however, when records were lost due to a fire on the premises of Iron Mountain the EU auditors did accept copies.

- 5.3 Archives and Quarantine Facility – The trustees at their next meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 were due to visit the new Archives and Quarantine facility. The Museum was a legal place of deposit under the National Archives Act and was awaiting approval of “place of deposit status” from the National Archives. The old archives had fallen below the required environmental standards and were constrained in terms of space. The Museum Archives hold material that has been selected for permanent preservation as an official historical record. It was noted the Museum did store some modern records e.g. Financial records, but had run out of space.

- 5.4 Estate Condition Survey - The Estates Department had completed a review of the condition of the buildings on the NHM sites. This was a more thorough repeat of an exercise last carried out in 2007. The outcome of the survey was presented to the Estate and Buildings Advisory Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013. The maintenance liability to bring all existing buildings and plant up to a good standard of repair was now c.£69m in comparison with the 2007 liability of c.£40m. The Museum believed the maintenance liability was comparable to many public sector organisations looking after heritage buildings. The Audit Manager, National Audit Office was working on a maintenance backlog benchmarking exercise across the Museum's and Galleries sector and this review supported the Museum's conclusion. It was observed the Museum's capital grant of c.£2.3m was insufficient for an Estate with a value of c.£420m. It was noted a few public sector organisations had been able to secure one-off Government capital grants. Members agreed a risk assessment of key backlog priorities in the short term and over time needed to be produced for the Audit & Risk Committee and trustees.

NG/KR

- 5.5 The Executive Board were considering how to record on-going maintenance liability to demonstrate that it was being reduced over time. This will form part of a paper to the Board of Trustees in November and later consideration of long-term capital expenditure needs.

## **ACTION**

- 5.6 Attendance and Visitor Related Income – The Museum had strong visitor attendance over the second quarter in common with other London attractions. The weekend of 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> October 2013 the Museum was 8.3% up on the previous year and the moving annual total was approaching 5.4m. The October half term school holidays began on 28<sup>th</sup> October 2013. During the October half term week in 2012 there was attendance of 160,000. It was observed that it will be interesting to see if this was matched or exceeded in 2013.
- 5.7 The major contributors to visitor related income, Retail and Catering, were showing greater percentage growth in income than in attendance. This maybe due to: (a) more confidence in the economy; and (b) 50% of NHM visitors were from overseas. Currently overseas visitors were spending more as Sterling was weak against the Euro. The Museum was vulnerable, however, to a major travel disruption or a rise in the value of Sterling.
- 5.8 Purchase of a Stegosaurus Fossil - An anonymous donor had pledged a gift to the NHM large enough to purchase a complete Stegosaurus fossil found in the USA and recently excavated. Paul Barrett, Merit Researcher (dinosaur expert) had been to the US to authenticate the fossil which was believed to be a new species and arrangements to ship back to the UK were being made. It was intended to get the mounted fossil on public display after a period of scientific research. In addition, the bones will go through a 3D scanner so they can be replicated for display or sale as replicas.
- 5.9 Government Relations -The summer months were generally a quiet time for interaction with DCMS. The Museum had been working with DCMS officials in the Appointments Unit on the process for appointing a new Chair of the NHM Board of Trustees. There was a lot of Government attention on improving efficiency. The Director of Finance & Corporate Services had given a presentation at a DCMS workshop on NHM shared services, which was well received.
- 5.10 The Museum was interested in offsite collections storage to free up space for the public. New build was likely to be more cost effective than bringing existing NHM buildings up to the necessary environmental conditions. NHM will consider whether a shared facility with other Museums and Galleries, or other partners, offered an efficient and practical solution. Science Group had done extensive work on collections storage and which collections were accessed less frequently and could, therefore, be moved off site. Science Group work will feed into NHM future capital expenditure plans.
- 5.11 Organisational Restructuring – The new Director of Public Engagement had been in post six months. It was anticipated that he will make a few small changes to Group organisational structure to reflect the first draft of his new Public Engagement strategy. It was expected the changes will be completed by the end of the fiscal year.
- 5.12 Science Group Senior Appointments - On 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013, the new Heads of Life Sciences and Earth Sciences took up their appointments. Tim Littlewood succeeded Phil Rainbow who retires at the end of October, as Head of Life Sciences and Richard Herrington had taken up the role of Head of Earth Sciences. Andy Fleet had become Associate Director of Science and will focus exclusively on a number of major projects, most notably the Collections Storage Infrastructure Programme (CSIP). The new Heads of Life Sciences and Earth Sciences appointments were made on the basis of competitive interview against a number of external candidates.
- 5.13 Review of Outstanding Audit Recommendations – The Head of Risk & Assurance and the Director continued to review in their one to one meetings whether there were any priority 2 or higher recommendations outstanding from previous audits. The only area worthy of note was collections security which had been followed up recently. The Head of Risk & Assurance had assured the Director that the remaining items still incomplete had active plans for completion.

## **ACTION**

- 6 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES' FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR THE PERIOD APRIL 2013 – SEPTEMBER 2013 (PAPER TAC 31 /2013)**
- 6.1 The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented his paper which was in the new format as agreed at the last meeting of the Board of Trustees. The aim of the new format was to increase transparency of reporting on NHM financial performance.
- 6.2 General Fund -The forecasted year end outturn for the General Fund was £1.341m which was a decrease of £1.920m compared with the original budget of £3.261m approved by the Trustees in November 2012. The decrease was attributable to a reduction of £0.890m in the original budget for resource grant in aid for 2013/14 which was subsequently revised downwards in both the Autumn statement (December 2012) and the March 2013 Budget. The budget setting round for 2014/15 will be a challenge as resource grant in aid reduced further.
- 6.3 Net Self Generated \Trading Income – The forecasted outturn for the year was above the original budget and reflected stronger than expected performances for Retail and Catering, offset by a lower than expected Admissions Income for special exhibitions, the lack of sponsorship for the Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition, and the anticipated loss on consultancy following the restructuring of the business.
- 6.4 Salaries – Civil Service Pay Guidance currently required departments and their sponsored bodies to limit pay increases to an average of one per cent in 2014/15 and 2015/16. However, pay was one of the administrative freedoms from state control announced by the Chancellor in June 2013. Currently it was unclear how the administrative freedom relating to pay would affect the Museum. It was not expected, however, that NHM would be released fully from public sector pay restraint. The details of the administrative freedoms will be outlined in the new draft DCMS Museum Management Statement and Financial Memorandum which was expected imminently. It was noted the corporate risk of not being able to recruit and retain suitably skilled web, IT and scientific staff was on a downward trend. Significant numbers of staff had not left the Museum over the last few years for pay reasons. It was observed, however, that scientific salaries in NHM were significantly behind those in the academic sector.
- 6.5 Capital Expenditure and Capital Income - Gross capital and projects expenditure to date amounted to £5.278m (including commitments) and it was anticipated the full year budget of £8.655m maybe exceeded.
- 6.6 Resource – Operating Expenditure - The forecasted outturn had been increased marginally to reflect a likely shortfall in the energy budget (within Estates) of c.£0.5m as energy prices continued to rise. This had been offset by a part release from contingency and a decrease in forecasted expenditure compared to the original budget for special exhibitions.
- 6.7 Conference and Events – It was observed that conference and events was a good indicator of the health of the economy. The budgeted net contribution for 2013/14 was c.£1.8m and maybe higher. In previous years net contribution had been as high as c.£2m or as low as c.£1.4m. NHM had not historically invested significantly in this area. However, proposals were being considered to improve the quality of NHM facilities e.g. the Flett Theatre and Central Hall.

## **ACTION**

### **7 MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE NAO AND KINGSTON SMITH RECOMMENDATIONS 2012-2013 (PAPER TAC 32 /2013)**

- 7.1 The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented his paper.
- 7.2 The management responses to the audit findings arising from the 2012/13 year end audits of the NHM (NAO) and NHM Trading Company (Kingston Smith) were considered by the Committee. None of the findings were significant and the recommendations had either been actioned, were in hand or will be picked up as part of the year end procedures.

### **8 NAO/BDO AUDIT PLANNING REPORT 2013/2014 (PAPER TAC 33/2013)**

- 8.1 The NAO Audit Manager presented the report which was in a new format.
- 8.2 Members of the Audit & Risk Committee were asked to consider: (a) whether the NAO assessment of the risks of material misstatement were complete; (b) whether management's response to these risks was adequate; (c) the audit plan to address the risks; and (d) whether the financial statements could be materially misstated due to fraud.
- 8.3 The NAO/BDO were currently developing the audit plan.
- 8.4 Presumed Significant Risks – There was a general presumption of the risk of fraud from management override of controls and in revenue recognition. It was observed by members that controls in the new Finance system will be automated and could be overridden by an IT expert, for example, to create fictitious suppliers. The NAO will consider the new Finance system to be a significant risk in their 2014/15 audit plan. In addition, specialist IT external auditors will be used on the 2014/15 audit.
- 8.5 Other Matters - The NAO/BDO had not identified any specific significant risks to the NHM. The risks below at Para 8.5 to 8.8 had a direct impact on the financial statements but were not significant.
- 8.6 The NHM Development Trust – The NAO/BDO will continue to review evidence supporting the independence of the trust and assess any financial reporting requirements.
- 8.7 The New Finance System – The NAO/BDO will continue to work closely with the project team to monitor developments.
- 8.8 Revaluation of Land & Buildings - The museum was due a full quinquennial review at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014 and the NAO/BDO will assess the expertise of the valuer and that the revalued amounts were appropriately reflected in the accounts. As in previous years the Museum will use Gerald Eve for the revaluation which will impact on non cash asset valuation and depreciation. It was noted Gerald Eve provided the indices for the intervening years.
- 8.9 Performing the Audit – The NAO/BDO plan to test key account balances and will consider asset additions including the newly acquired Stegosaurus fossil. The overall budget for the Stegosaurus fossil included transportation, installation and the salary for a researcher. The fossil will form part of the collections. It will, therefore, be capitalised as a heritage asset in the Balance Sheet at cost without depreciation or revaluation. An application for a grant from the NHM Development Trust was being made by the Museum at the Trust meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013. If approved by the Trust the money will be transferred to the Museum at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014.

## **ACTION**

- 8.10 Reliance on Internal Audit – The NAO/BDO will meet with the Head of Risk & Assurance and seek to take assurance from internal audit work where their objectives covered areas of joint interest. It was noted that due to the implementation of the new Finance system the internal audit of key financial controls had been brought forward to the second week in December. The audit will look at the controls in place and transaction over the previous 8 months to support the NAO/BDO review of the 2013/14 financial statements.
- 8.11 Sector Developments – The Charities Commission had issued an exposure draft on a new Charities SORP. In addition, the Treasury had released a new edition of Managing Public Money (MPM) in July 2013. It was noted that current DCMS/NHM Museum Management Statement and Financial Memorandum referred to Government Accounting which had been replaced by MPM.
- 8.12 Members approved: (a) the risks of material misstatement identified by the NAO/BDO and the work to be carried out; and (b) the NAO/BDO Audit fee (which was consistent with that charged in 2012/2013).

## **9 HEAD OF RISK & ASSURANCE PROGRESS REPORT TO OCTOBER 2013 (PAPER TAC 34/2013)**

- 9.1 The Head of Risk & Assurance presented her progress report and her review of the Payment Card Industry (PCI) Data Security Standard (DSS).
- 9.2 New Finance System – Money Matters Project – The scope of the review had been discussed with the Director of Finance & Corporate Services and the NAO Audit Manager. The review covered the supplier selection process, project plans and project management methodology to implement the new Finance system. The testing of: (a) the migration of standing data, assets and balances; and (b) the operation of on-line authorisation controls was not possible until after the go-live date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 as this information was not available. Currently there were no issues arising from the audit, however, ensuring that resources were adequate was a recurring issue with new Finance System projects.
- 9.3 Agency Staff – The Head of Risk & Assurance was currently managing the unit with agency staff. It was noted it maybe necessary to bring in expert IT auditors to carry out the 2014/15 review of key controls on the implementation of the new Finance System. The Head of Risk & Assurance will liaise with the NAO/BDO and explore whether the Cross Department Internal Audit Service (XDIAS) can assist.
- 9.4 Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCIDSS) – The Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard (PCIDSS) was a priority 2 report and contained a higher than usual number of priority 2 recommendations. The Museum was not fully compliant with the standard and at the time of the review no one in the Museum had ownership of compliance. The Chair and members commended the report and agreed the recommendations needed to be addressed as a matter of priority. It was noted that non compliance was a reputational risk and responsibility for compliance had now been assigned to the Head of ICT. An action plan to address the recommendations in the audit report was due to be completed by the end of November 2013.
- 9.5 It was observed that with the implementation of near field communication wireless technology customers will be able to “wave and pay” over a credit card reader. There were security risks with this technology such as eavesdropping to intercept credit card information.
- 9.6 HM Treasury Internal Audit Customer Handbook July 2013 – Members noted the contents of the handbook.

JD

## **ACTION**

- 10 MAJOR CORPORATE RISKS AND LONG TERM INHERENTLY HIGH RISKS INCLUDING FRAUD & BRIBERY (PAPER TAC 35/2013)**
- MD 10.1 The Director presented a summary of the Major Corporate Risk templates for Quarter 2 which were presented in their entirety as requested by Committee members at their June 2013 meeting. The summary recorded the original and current score and the trend i.e. whether the risk was increasing or decreasing. It was observed that the pessimism or optimism of individual risk owners may not always be comparable. In addition, as there was not always a clear understanding of the red, amber, green (RAG) status the Director will apply a sense check to the templates.
- 10.2 Cuts in Grant in Aid - As the longer-term predictions for public spending remain gloomy beyond the end of the current Parliament it was expected that this risk would remain unchanged during the year.
- 10.3 New Finance System - Money Matters Project - Whilst the project was making good progress and change management activities were underway there was still a lot of detailed planning in respect of training and the year end timetable to take place. Therefore, the likelihood and impact of the overall risk remained unchanged.
- NG/KR 10.4 Offsite Crisis Management Facility - The Chair requested that there was a temporary amelioration of the absence of a purposely fitted out offsite facility to reduce the RAG status from red to amber in the short term. It was noted, however, that plans had been devised to utilise shared space at Wandsworth with the Library and a bid had been submitted to the Executive Board Autumn Planning Conference and approved. It was anticipated that basic IT and communication facilities will be in place in the short term, however, a fully and suitably configured facility may take longer.
- 10.5 The Chair and members found the Director's summary a useful aid to meaningful discussion.
- 11 DIRECTOR OF FINANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES UPDATE ON THE "MONEY MATTERS" PROJECT (PAPER TAC 36/2013)**
- 11.1 The Director of Finance and Corporate Services presented the latest project report for the new Finance system which had a "green" RAG status.
- 11.2 The Director of Finance & Corporate Services was confident with progress but not complacent. A major milestone was reached in mid October with the sign off of the confirmation of requirements. Configuration of the system had commenced and should be completed by early December. Testing will then take place in the Finance Department with roll out for user testing in the new year. The performance of the supplier had been very impressive. It was noted that the Science Museum was using an older version of the same accounting software.
- 11.3 The Chair observed that in his experience as a Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) for major government projects expenditure on change management, communication and training could always be increased. In addition, training should be as near as possible to the go-live date. It was noted that the Museum had extensive plans in place for change management, communication and training. There will be floor walkers and Super Users within teams when the system goes live. The key specialist users in Finance, Science and Public Engagement Administration Teams were gaining experience by taking part in the project e.g. Focus Groups. The challenge, however, will be business expenses and the change from a paper based system to an electronic system which will impact on general members of staff.

## **ACTION**

- 12, PRESENTATION BY THE HEAD OF CONTENT ON THE MAJOR CORPORATE RISK “ABSENCE OF A PLAN FOR GALLERY REDEVELOPMENT, PROGRAMMING AND EXHIBITIONS WITH IMPACT ON FUND RAISING AND BRAND” (PAPER TAC 37/2013)**
- 12.1 The Head of Content made her presentation on the management of the risk.
- 12.2 The 2011/16 Strategic Plan set out the Museum’s vision to be a scientific centre of global significance and one of the world’s leading visitor attractions for engagement with the natural world. To achieve this the NHM needed a clear and strategic approach to its programming and exhibitions. Although the Museum was successfully delivering a variety of content, across a range of channels, a fragmented approach was impacting on the Museum’s ability to clearly articulate its key messages and establish its brand position. In addition, in order to raise funding NHM needed to have clearly articulated propositions for its programmes, exhibitions and galleries.
- 12.3 The Museum had identified significant component risks and a series of actions had been undertaken which included:
- 12.4 Content Strategy - The Museum had established: (a) three key narrative themes Origins and Evolution, Biodiversity, Sustainability; and (b) a unified approach “Content Matrix” to deliver these across the channels of galleries, programmes, exhibitions and web. Staff were seen as a key stakeholder and the intention was that all front of house staff will be able to talk about the key themes in a language which will engage the general public. As a Gallery Plan was rolled out over the next 25 years the themes and Content Matrix will feed into Museum guides and terminology. A Content Board was set up in June 2013 and this will meet monthly in the first instance. A Content Strategy was to be developed by December 2013 which will inform NHM future fundraising approaches. The Head of Content had discussed fundraising with the Head of Development. Fundraising in future would not be for specific projects but cover a programme theme e.g. Sustainability across a range of channels.
- 12.5 Gallery Development Plan - Since the development of the Darwin Centre there had not been an overall plan for gallery redevelopment. A Gallery Development Plan Group was set up and undertook a series of reviews and benchmarking across other organisations. A draft Gallery Development Plan had been completed and was discussed at the Executive Board Planning Conference. The plan takes into account intellectual content, the national curriculum, space allocation, circulation and suggested a sequence of development. The Director was not aware of any competition for space or disagreement amongst staff over the draft plan. It was observed that to improve circulation popular galleries needed to be spread across the Museum and this had been considered during cross Museum consultation.
- 12.6 There will be a presentation on the draft Public Engagement Strategy at the next Development Trust meeting and the short term priorities for gallery development supported by the narrative behind the ideas. A number of the short term priorities had already been discussed during one to one meetings with Development Trust members.
- MD/JM/AB 12.7 The Committee suggested that the Board of Trustees discussed and interacted with the Gallery Development Plan before it was finalised.
- 12.8 Temporary Exhibition Programme - Using the Content Matrix as a framework a number of temporary exhibition ideas had been developed to complete the programme to 2015. One of these had been developed in conjunction with an external partner. The ideas will be presented to the Content Strategy Board and market tested to understand the potential audience and income.



## **ACTION**

12.9 To determine the rolling programme for 2016 onwards there had been: (a) a review of the costs and income of past exhibitions, which will inform run length and location; and (b) audience research to understand the appeal of different exhibition types: specimen-rich, photographic etc. These reviews will inform the Temporary Exhibition Strategy, which will inform the Content Strategy. The strategies will frame a call-out to staff for programme ideas in December/January. The call out will then undergo a selection process, research and market testing before being presented to the Content Strategy Board for approval. Approved programme ideas will form the basis of the future NHM annual programme.

AB

12.10 The Chair observed that pop-up exhibitions of a few related works of art were not resource intensive to create. Small temporary displays could keep galleries fresh and encourage repeat visitors as well as giving curatorial staff the opportunity to deploy their skills or show off current work. It was noted that the Museum was addressing new displays through: (a) the annual permanent gallery enhancement fund available to refresh galleries; and (b) the development of a display case in 2014 to hold a specimen and explain the science behind it. It was suggested the Museum could create competition between the curators to have items on display, like the Fourth Plinth in Trafalgar Square. In addition, it was noted that each year the Images of Nature gallery included a temporary exhibition of themed artworks. It was not clear, however, if the temporary exhibition in the Images of Nature Gallery was effectively communicated to the public. Members wondered how this might be done cost effectively. It was noted the Museum's communication strategy included cost effective ways of providing information to the public, for example, via social media.

12.11 At the start of the year the status of the risk was red, however, in the view of the Head of Content it had now fallen to green. Although the impact of the risk had not changed the likelihood had fallen significantly due to the work that had taken place over the last six months to develop a plan for Gallery Redevelopment. Members observed that this may be slightly optimistic as the plan still needed to be implemented. However, members agreed that the trend of the risk was down as shown in the Director's summary of the Major Corporate Risk templates for Quarter 2. It was noted that the risk as articulated related to the absence of a Gallery Development Plan and failure to implement the plan was likely to be a new major corporate risk going forward.

### **13 PRESENTATION BY AILSA BARRY (HEAD OF CONTENT) ON THE MAJOR CORPORATE RISK "FAILURE TO DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT AN EFFECTIVE CROSS-MUSEUM STRATEGY FOR LEARNING ACTIVITIES" (PAPER TAC 38/2013)**

13.1 The Head of Content made her presentation on the management of the risk.

13.2 Following the restructure of the Public Engagement Group, and changes to the National Curriculum it was timely to review the current education offer and consider the future approach and priorities over 2014/18. In addition, the Museum had an aspiration to be a centre of excellence for informal science learning.

13.3 Core Target Audience - The risk was mitigated by defining the core audience for the first phase of strategy development as young people under the age of 18 in formal learning. A second phase for engaging students in tertiary education, and adults on formal courses was being considered.

13.4 External environment - A PEST and SWOT analysis was carried out which looked at a range of factors including: (a) changes to the National Curriculum; (b) the growing influence of digital technology in learning; (c) rapid social change in London; and (d) the need to refurbish existing facilities.

## **ACTION**

- 13.5 Stakeholders - The Museum conducted focus groups and interviews with teachers and consulted with staff.
- 13.6 Learning Strategy - Although the Learning Strategy had not been finalised a lot of work had been completed e.g. a draft implementation plan. A Synopsis of the strategy was presented to Executive Board in October 2013 and the final was to be agreed by December 2013. Professor Sir John Holman who was on the Board of Trustees had been actively involved and had added enormous value. The full strategy will be presented to the Board of Trustees in February 2014.
- 13.7 Government Departments -The Museum was engaging with both the Department of Education (DfE) and the Department for Business, Innovation & Skills (BIS). BIS was interested in Science Education, in which it invests. There was, however, less interest in cultural education. The Director had met with Permanent Secretary for the DfE. DfE were particularly interested in how schools were managed.
- 13.8 Learning Proposals - It was observed that the Development Trust was holding a donation of £100k for learning proposals. It was noted the Museum had developed a proposal for a new Learning Centre in 2012 ahead of the strategy. However, rather focusing on the uniqueness of Museum collections the proposal included new science labs which many schools had and which may not be appropriate. The new Gallery Plan, however, considered the need for gallery spaces which can accommodate students and teachers. There were a number of learning proposals which can be put to the Development Trust in the short term once the Learning Strategy was ratified. These included: (a) improved eating areas and cloak room facilities for schools; (b) a bursary scheme to help schools in areas of high social deprivation visit the Museum e.g. funding coach transport and teacher cover to ensure an appropriate staff ratio. There was also a proposal for a mobile Museum truck with portable equipment e.g. scanning electronic microscope and visualisation table. The Museum was also looking to utilise digital technology in the galleries to improve learning.
- 13.9 BBC and Film Makers -There were opportunities to engage with a range of film makers across various content themes and different technologies. The Museum Director had recently attended a round table meeting with Tony Hall, Director General BBC to talk about science programming. The Museum had also been working with Sky on the 3D programme David Attenborough's Natural History Museum Alive. It was noted that the BBC had recently been working with regional museums in schools. The Head of Content intended to explore whether this would be of value for the NHM.
- 13.10 Informal Learning Indicators - The Wellcome Trust wished to develop indicators to measure the long term impact of informal learning which was difficult to measure as there were no stated goals as with formal learning. The Head of Content was participating on a working group looking at indicators for informal learning.
- 13.11 At the start of the year the status of the risk was amber, however, in the view of the Head of Content it had now fallen to green. The likelihood had reduced due to the amount of work completed to develop a Learning Strategy. The impact had, however, increased due to its importance to the Museum and NHM key organisational objectives. Members were encouraged by the presentation and the fall in the status of the risk to amber.
- 13.12 The Chair thanked the Head of Content for the informative presentations.

## **14 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 14.1 There was no other business.

***ACTION***

**15 DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

15.1 The next meeting will be held at 10.00 a.m. on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February 2014

**KEY TO ACTION INITIALS**

Michael Dixon - MD

Neil Greenwood - NG

Justin Morris - JM

Kevin Rellis - KR

Jan Day - JD

Ailsa Barry - AB