

THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM
AT AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING ON
TUESDAY 1 APRIL 2014
AT 10.00 A.M.
AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

Present

TRUSTEES

Sir David Omand GCB (in the Chair)
Daniel Alexander QC
Professor Sir Roy Anderson FRS FMedSci
Louise Charlton
Professor David Drewry
Professor Christopher Gilligan
Professor Sir John Holman
Dr Derek Langslow CBE
Dr Kim L Winser OBE

In Attendance (alphabetical order)

Frances Allen (Minutes)	Executive Assistant to the Director and Secretary to the Board
Joe Baker	Head of External Affairs
Rachael Casstles	Head of Internal Affairs
Dr Michael Dixon	Museum Director (and Executive Board Chair)
Louise Emerson	Head of Business and Commercial Strategy (for item 4)
Neil Greenwood	Director of Finance & Corporate Services (Executive Board member)
Ian Henderson	Chair of Estates Buildings Advisory Committee (for item 5)
Dr Justin Morris	Director of Public Engagement (Executive Board member)
Professor Ian Owens	Director of Science (Executive Board member)
Malcolm Reading	Malcolm Reading Consultants (for item 5)

Preliminary

As the Museum has no formally elected Chair of the Board at present, Professor Christopher Gilligan proposed the motion to elect Sir David Omand as chair for the meeting; this was seconded by Dr Kim L Winser.

1593 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Sir John Beddington CMG FRS

1594 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS (TP 14/19)

There were no declarations of interest nor changes to the Register of Interests.

CLOSED DISCUSSION

1595 TRUSTEE/CHAIR OF THE BOARD APPOINTMENT

The Board held a closed session, with only the Director and Ms Allen in attendance to formally elect the Chair of the Board of Trustees.

Sir David Omand reminded the Board that under the constitution of the British Museum Act 1963 the Board of Trustees has the right to choose the Chair from amongst their number and the purpose of the meeting was to exercise this right and elect a Chair of the Board. The role was a Prime Ministerial appointment and the Board had agreed to follow the OCPA (Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments) regulations in the spirit of demonstrating adherence to the *Seven Principles of Public Life* and also that the process was open, transparent and fair.

As a result of the selection process, Sir David was delighted to confirm that the Prime Minister had appointed The Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint as a Trustee of the Natural History Museum for four years from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2018 and recommended that he be considered for the role of Chair. Lord Green brings a breadth of experience and knowledge across Government and business sectors

The Board of Trustees elected Lord Green as Chair of the Board.

SUMMARY
The Board unanimously elected Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint as Chair of the Board.

OPEN DISCUSSION

Main Items:

1596 WILDLIFE PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR LICENCING (TP 14/20)

The Board considered the four options presented in the paper by Ms Louise Emerson (Head of Business and Commercial Strategy) on the future of the licence agreement with BBC Worldwide (BBCW) for the Wildlife Photographer of the Year (WPY) competition. The Licence Agreement expires on 31 October 2014 and has a six month notice of renewal period.

[This Minute has been redacted for commercial purposes and will be kept confidential indefinitely]

1597 GROUNDS DEVELOPMENT COMPETITION (TP 14/21)

The Board welcomed Ian Henderson, Malcolm Reading and Kevin Rellis (Head of Estates) to the meeting. Mr Henderson, in his role as Chair of the Estate Buildings Advisory Committee (EBAC), acted as Chair of the Competition Jury with Mr Reading acting as adviser.

Mr Rellis gave context and purpose to the discussion by explaining that the NHM had launched an architectural competition for the redesign of the Museum's grounds in September 2013. The competition attracted 43 expressions of interest from which five teams were shortlisted and invited to submit their response to a detailed brief and full tender exercise. The ethos of the competition was to embrace the civic role of the NHM and this was expounded by the five submissions going on public display in the earth galleries. The submissions were finally reviewed by a Competition Jury on 13 March 2014, which recommended unanimously the appointment of Niall McLaughlin Architects working in association with Kim Wilkie, Landscape Architect. The Board was asked to recognise and support this decision.

The NHM Strategy and Vision, together with other key strategies (Public Space and Gallery Development Plans) formed the cornerstone for the project and was instrumental in shaping the project's tender brief. A commonality of all these strategies was the tenet to strengthen the relationship between the inner and outer space to improve the visitor experience from start to finish and to ensure that this positive journey starts in the Grounds, thus the underlying principle of the project was to make the Grounds part of the Museum experience not the precursor. Tacit to this ambition – and also a masterplan priority - was to improve access to and circulation throughout the Grounds and ingress into the Museum. A component of this ambition is the interface with Exhibition Road and the tunnel and in this context it is essential to capitalise on possible TFL investment in South Kensington underground station and the tunnel.

The tender brief was also underpinned by the desire to position the Museum more clearly as an authoritative voice on the natural world and ensure a sustainable financial model for the NHM, which included exploiting the grounds to develop outdoor temporary exhibitions. In this respect it was important to gain the support of local residents who have no issue with the ideology of exploiting the grounds for commercial purpose, but had concerns about how they were being currently exploited.

Mr Henderson resolutely pointed out that the NHM was at an important stage in its development where every accommodation had to be made to support the schemes and ensure that momentum is maintained in order for plans to be realised.

Trustees had a number of observations, which they shared with Mr Henderson and Mr Reading:

- The Board would welcome the opportunity to learn more about the Museum's capital priorities, the consequent fundraising prospects and what impact the Estate Condition Survey (submitted by EBAC in October 2013) could have on future planning. Similarly, Mr Henderson is aware that there are a number of initiatives and studies afoot and felt that it would be helpful to review how these are to be coordinated and their interdependency on each other. Of particular importance is the need to identify offsite collections storage in order to free up space and hence increase gallery space

- Dr Winsor wished to ensure that digitisation is included in the brief and Mr Reading assured her that this would be important in developing the design further. Dr Morris regarded this an important component and is an interdependency between the Grounds and Central Hall
- A PR communications plan will be put in place as the project develops. The first milestone in the timetable could be to promote the sponsorship of the Central Hall.

SUMMARY

The Board of Trustees endorsed the decision made by the Grounds Design Competition Jury to appoint Niall McLaughlin Architects and was content for Mr Reading to remain part of the team. The timetable was acknowledged as:

Appoint Architect	25 April 2014
Commence design process	28 April 2014
Completion of RIBA Stage 3 design	Jan 2015
Key Decision (design adopted as addition to SPD)	April 2015
Planning and Listed Building Consent obtained	June 2015

In supporting the proposal, the Board wished to be kept informed of progress and assurance that the various components and interdependencies are addressed.

ACTIONS:

- The Director believed that there was a clear need for Trustees to gain a better understanding of all the Museum's capital and planning issues and it was agreed that a tour of the estate would be arranged for Trustees at the May meeting.
- EBAC was asked to circulate a summary note highlighting the key issues and opportunities.
- The Director is to ensure that the Chair is fully briefed.

1598 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

- 16 April 2014 – Annual Trustees' Dinner
- 13 May 2014 – formal Board of Trustees' Meeting (this replaces 20 May, which will be used to tour the estate).
- 20 May 2014 (see above)
- 1 July 2014 (Evening: Annual Staff Summer Party)
- 30 September 2014 (Annual Trustee Strategy Day, Chelsea Physic Garden) – Agenda to include competition.
- 18 November 2014 (PM: Science Session)

1599 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Kew: Following recent reports in the media, Professor Owens reported that the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew was facing a £5m shortfall in revenue in the coming financial year and as a consequence a number of jobs could be cut - a proportion of which would be from the science body of staff. However, Professor Owens confirmed that Kew scientists were collaborating with the NHM on three projects: (1) the creation of a UK digital herbarium; (2) shared onsite and offsite collections storage and (3) a biosphere modelling project (using NHM and Kew data collections). Professor Owens will keep the Board updated.

Retirement of Board Members: The Trustees and Director expressed their thanks to Louise Charlton and Sir David Omand who were retiring from the Board after serving eight years. The Director wished to give his personal thanks to Ms Charlton for her professional expertise and freshness of approach and to Sir David for his knowledge of Whitehall and his support as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee. The Board echoed these sentiments.