

**THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**

**AT A MEETING ON**

**TUESDAY 11 FEBRUARY, 2003**

**AT 10.00 A.M.**

**AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**

**Present**

**TRUSTEES**

Professor Sir Keith O'Nions FRS (in the Chair)  
Professor Michael Hassell CBE FRS  
Professor Jacquie McGlade  
Dame Judith Mayhew DBE  
Lord Palumbo  
Mr Oliver Stocken  
Sir Richard Sykes FRS

Sir Neil Chalmers  
Dr Mary Fridlington (Secretary to the Board)  
Anna Cuss (minutes)

Ms Sharon Ament, Ms Deirdre Candlin, Mr Neil Greenwood, Mr David Hill and Professor Henderson were in attendance.

**690 HONOUR FOR DIRECTOR OF SCIENCE**

Trustees recorded their congratulations to Professor Henderson on his recently awarded CBE, in recognition of his services to Museums.

**691 APPOINTMENT OF A NEW TRUSTEE (TP 03/01)**

The Chairman informed Trustees that Professor Dianne Edwards, CBE FRS, had been appointed to the Board of Trustees by the Prime Minister, for four years with effect from 1 January 2003, replacing Lord Oxburgh, as one of the two earth scientists on the Board. They noted that Professor Edwards was Distinguished Research Professor in the Department of Earth Sciences, Cardiff University and was also Head of the Department's research program.

**692 MEMBERSHIP OF TRUSTEES' COMMITTEES (TP 02/03)**

Trustees were informed that since the retirement of Lord Oxburgh from the Board and Professor Sir Keith O'Nions becoming the Chairman, there had been subsequent impacts on the membership of Trustees' committees. Following initial soundings by the Chairman, Professor McGlade and Professor Partridge had indicated their willingness to serve respectively on the Finance and the Remuneration Committee. Trustees welcomed and agreed the proposals that they should be appointed to these committees. They noted that the two committees now comprised the following members; Finance Committee - Oliver Stocken, (Chair) Professor Michael Hassell, Professor Jacquie McGlade (new member) and the Chairman (*ex officio* member); Remuneration Committee - Professor Sir Keith O'Nions (Chair), Sir Richard Sykes and Professor Linda Partridge (new member).

**693 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Ms Jana Bennett, Professor Christopher Leaver, Professor Anne McLaren, Professor Linda Partridge.

In noting the number of absentees at this and recent meetings, the Chairman encouraged Trustees to attend meetings once they had been placed in their diaries, and the Museum Secretariat agreed to establish meeting dates at least a year in advance.

**694 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 21 NOVEMBER 2002**

The minutes of the meeting of the Trustees held on 21 November 2002 were confirmed and signed.

**695 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF 21 NOVEMBER 2002**

- New Director of Science (TM 21 November: 679)  
Following a selection process and interviews during January, the Director was happy to report that Dr Richard Lane, currently Head of International Programmes at the Wellcome Trust and formerly Keeper of Entomology at the Museum had been appointed new Director of Science. The panel felt that Dr Lane had the strongest combination of scientific achievement and management experience, and was confident that his enthusiasm and experience would enable him to build very well upon all the excellent work carried out by Paul Henderson. The Director confirmed that Dr Lane would start at the Museum on July 1, and that there would be a hand over period with Professor Henderson.
- Culture, Media and Sport Committee Report (TM 21 November: 680 (ii))  
The report 'National museums and galleries: funding and free admission', to which the Museum had contributed evidence, had been published on 11 December 2002 and contained a good and favourable analysis of the situation. It clearly put the onus on Government to provide adequate funds as compensation for admissions revenue that the Museum had forgone. A Government response had not yet been received.
- The Frozen Ark (TM: 21 November: 682 (ii) b)  
Professor Henderson reported that since the last meeting, a Frozen Ark Steering Group of experts (including Professor McLaren), chaired by Bryan Clarke, Emeritus Professor of Genetics at Nottingham University, had been established to discuss the potential for setting up a central bank for the preservation of DNA from all endangered multicellular animals. The Steering Group would establish an understanding of activity in this area being undertaken by other institutions. Professor Henderson confirmed that the Museum's Frozen Ark Liaison Committee, chaired by Professor McLaren, with Museum representation from Professor Henderson and Professor Rainbow, would contribute to this work to ensure effective liaison between institutions. Trustees will receive further progress reports in due course.
- Government response to the House of Lords Report 'What on Earth?' (TM: 18 July: 666 (iii))  
Professor Henderson reported that the Government response, which had not yet been officially published, was extremely disappointing, with insufficient reference to some of the key recommendations made, particularly on the issue of increasing financial support for systematics. However, assurances had been received from DEFRA that it would address the recommendation that it set up a body of representatives from both Government and science research to take forward some of the immediate concerns about the future of taxonomy. Professor Henderson had also been in contact with Baroness Walmsley (who chaired the enquiry), who had agreed to coordinate comments on the Government response with a view to initiating a fuller discussion in the House of Lords.

## 696 DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- i) **Theft of loaned diamond.** Trustees were informed that a diamond lent by the NHM to Museon in The Hague for their diamond exhibition (a carbonado [BM 33599; insurance value £5000] had been stolen on 1 December 2002. The Museum had been in full compliance with its own responsibilities, and there was little that could be done to increase the high level of security already in place. However Professor Henderson was investigating whether security during transportation of such valuable loans could be improved as an extra precaution.
- ii) **Sustainable Development Education Panel.** The Director reported that the Sustainable Development Education Panel, of which he was a member, was due to conclude its work. The Panel, jointly sponsored by DEFRA and DfES, had been in existence for about five years, and was concerned mainly with raising awareness about sustainable development amongst the wider public. Its work was of recognised significance and included input from the Museum on informal methods of learning about sustainable development. The Panel would be presenting its final report to The Rt Hon Michael Meacher, Minister of State for the Environment, at their final meeting, to be held at the Museum on 25 February 2003.
- iii) **DCMS Human Remains Working Group.** The Director updated Trustees on the work being carried out by the DCMS Human Remains Working Group, which had been set up to establish the current status of human remains in museums and galleries in the UK and to make recommendations on the advisability of changing the law to allow repatriation of remains as well as to consider guidance on their care and safe keeping, and the handling of requests for their return. A final report had now been drafted, but there was dissatisfaction within the Group on its appropriateness in solving the issues concerned. Trustees recommended that the Director, given the Museum's role as a holder of significant human remains collections, should contact the Minister for the Arts, The Rt Hon Baroness Blackstone, to gauge her opinion on the best way forward.
- iv) **Trustees' Annual Dinner.** Trustees were reminded that the Trustees' Annual Dinner was due to take place on Tuesday 25 March in the Darwin Centre. The occasion would also mark the official farewell to departing Chairman, Lord Oxburgh.
- v) **Fundraising events.** The Director reported that a valuable meeting with Lord and Lady Wolfson, in relation to the Museum's re-application to the Wolfson Foundation for Darwin Centre Phase Two funding, had been held. There had also been a very successful formal dinner, hosted for the Museum by Harvey Soning, a former Development Trustee and current Darwin Centre Endorser, at which a number of important contacts had been made. Lord Oxburgh would be hosting a similar event at the House of Lords on 14 March and it was hoped that some Trustees would be able to attend.

## 697 TRUSTEES' MATTERS (TP 03/03)

### a) Trustees' interactions with the Museum (TP 03/03a)

Professor Sir Keith O'Nions reported that, prior to taking up his role of Chairman, he had made pre-arranged visits to various areas of the Museum's work. He had found these extremely enlightening and valuable, and from subsequent feedback, knew the visits to be much appreciated by the staff involved. Trustees therefore endorsed the Chairman's recommendation that they should each take the opportunity to broaden their knowledge of the Museum by making similar visits, perhaps on an annual basis. Dr Fridlington would be in touch to discuss specific areas of interest and dates for such visits.

### b) Implications of changes to Freedom of Information Legislation (TP 03/03b)

Dr Fridlington gave a brief summary of work which had been carried out since the Trustees' endorsement at their February 2002 meeting, that they, as a Board, would be the Museum's Data Controller under the Data Protection Act 1998. The principal piece of work completed was the Museum's Publication Scheme, which, as a Public Body the Museum was obliged to submit under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. The scheme, which outlined the information that the Museum would provide to the public on the internet and in paper copy as well as the charges that would apply for providing such information, had been approved by the Information Commissioner in November 2002.

Trustees noted this information, and agreed in line with the scheme, to make the following information available for public view;

- i) background information on each member of the board
- ii) minutes of Trustee meetings, (excluding information regarding personal details of living individuals or affecting commercial interests) one month after they had been approved by the Board
- iii) the Trustees' register of interests, as at present, updated each financial year

Dr Fridlington would contact each Trustee in order to update the information currently held.

## 698 CORPORATE PLANNING

### i) Corporate Plan 2003-07 (TP 03/04a)

The Director outlined the main features of the draft Corporate Plan which had been drafted against the statements of the ten year vision. Trustees raised a number of points:

- Sir Richard Sykes was keen that the quality of the public offer was maintained in the face of rising visitor numbers. He enquired whether the Museum was generating sufficient income from visitors to enable the ambitious investments outlined in the budget to go ahead. Ms Candlin said that a full presentation on the Museum's detailed public offer would be made to Trustees at their May meeting. However, in the meantime, she explained that the substantial retail investments outlined were based on three needs. To invest in the income-generating infrastructure; to consolidate the presently dispersed offer and to place it in the most prominent locations to secure high visibility to visitors. The plans were currently being developed in more detail and being fully costed and tested to ensure that they were affordable, offered real improvement and would reduce costs over time. There were, in addition, many changes which could be introduced, without charge, to improve upon current income generation from visitors, and these would be presented in May as part of the full public offer proposal.
- Lord Palumbo enquired whether the potential for gaining income from scientific research was being fully maximised. Professor Henderson responded that the total income from research and consulting was currently c£3.5m, which included contract work for commercial clients as well as research grant income. However, there was potential for growth in this area, particularly in collaboration with universities and industrial partners. He encouraged Trustees to include the dedicated Research and Consulting Office as part of their individual visits to areas of the Museum in order to hear more about the Museum's work in this area.
- Professor Hassell enquired about the Museum's strategy for enhancing activity in the very broad area of Biomedical Sciences. Professor Henderson described how the approach will be to strengthen the areas in which our scientists have expert knowledge and strength – namely in the application of systematics to vectors of diseases. As an example he referred to the Museum's work on the spread of malaria, which could be built upon, particularly in collaboration. He stressed the Museum's unique role in having the ability to perform such research.
- Professor McGlade suggested setting up accompanied scientific research tours for paying guests, much in the way that Earthwatch offered similar opportunities, as another way of generating income.

With these comments, Trustees approved the Corporate Plan, subject to final endorsement by the Chairman of a revised draft, incorporating these comments.

### ii) Budget 2003-07 (TP 03/04b)

Mr Greenwood outlined the draft budget, based upon the Museum's ten year vision priorities, for 2003-07, which had been considered and endorsed by the Finance Committee at their meeting on 5 February 2003. Trustees noted that there was a surplus of at least £2m at the end of each financial year, excluding all income and expenditure associated with the Darwin Centre Phase 2 development, for which it was intended that fundraising would provide. They also noted that Directors Group had endorsed a proposal to fix the budget for the first two years of the period in order to give certainty and enable planning, and to remove the need for a major budget exercise each year. There would still, however, be a formal preparation and approval process. Expenditure allocations would be reviewed should income forecasts be less than anticipated or overspending occur. Mr Stocken added that Finance Committee would be receiving a paper on the drivers behind income generation to fully understand its potential.

Trustees approved budget for 2003-07.

iii) The Funding Agreement 2003-06 (TP 03/4c)

The Director presented the draft Funding Agreement setting out the contract between The Natural History Museum and DCMS between 2003-06. Trustees noted that the document had been drafted by DCMS and aimed to define how the Museum's work would meet the Department's priorities. The Museum had proposed to include a form of words at paragraph 6.4 to enable the Museum to discuss further with DCMS those issues of governance and administrative status, which were currently unhelpful, in order to deliver a more effective way of working for all concerned.

Trustees approved the draft funding agreement and noted that the Chairman would sign it on their behalf.

**699 DARWIN CENTRE**

Mr Pellow, Project Director of the Darwin Centre, joined the meeting for this item.

i) Report from Project Director and continued design development update (TP 03/05a)

Mr Pellow outlined the key elements of the RIBA Stage D submission, whose guidelines were being followed for Phase Two of the project. These included; bringing the cocoon forward to the west side of the development; a full heritage impact assessment; pest management; improvements to the façade; further exploration on the viability of the cocoon; reinstatement of the northern zone; clarification of the connections between Phase Two and existing structures; and circulation of staff and public within the building, particularly through the cocoon.

Trustees noted these developments and raised a number of points:

- Mr Stocken asked whether any changes had been made as a direct result of lessons learnt from Phase One. Mr Pellow responded that Phase One had in fact paved the way for Phase Two by showing what heights could be achieved by such a project, but, there were a number of adjustments which could be made to Phase Two to ensure that it functioned in the best way possible.
- Lord Palumbo recommended that further detailing of Phase One should be shown on the representative model (which was on display) to show the relationship between the two more clearly. Mr Pellow confirmed that a higher quality presentation model was planned as well as an animated walkthrough. Lord Palumbo also questioned whether there were any outstanding issues with the innovative design and construction of the cocoon. Mr Pellow responded that in order to fully understand where the risks lay, a mock-up would be constructed and tested beforehand. He added specifically, that there was allowance within the cocoon for movement with temperature and for the coming and goings of staff and public. There was also permanent and unobtrusive provision for cleaning and maintenance.
- Professor McGlade asked for assurance that the impact of the project upon the local environment and residents had been fully assessed. Mr Pellow confirmed that it had and that the good relationship with local residents established with Phase One would be maintained.
- Trustees enquired about the current estimate for completing Phase Two. Mr Pellow confirmed that it had risen to £68.5m from £65m, largely as a result of reinstating the northern end. However, the intention was to keep as close to £65m as possible and large contingencies had been incorporated into the budget for this purpose. Mr Pellow also confirmed that c£2m had been spent on design development to date, some of which originated from the grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. He was working closely with Mr Greenwood on cashflow to enable this work to continue since it was necessary to produce sufficient detail for fundraising purposes. Trustees asked Mr Pellow to alert them to the cut off point for changes to design in order to avoid exposing the Museum to the financial risk of counter claims if those changes were made too late in the day.

Subject to these comments, Trustees noted and endorsed the design development to date.

iii) Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway Review (TP 03/5b)

Mr Pellow informed Trustees that Darwin Centre Phase Two would be subject to an Office of Government Commerce (OGC) Gateway Review. Although this was not yet mandatory, it was likely to become so in the near future and provided a useful additional control on the development of the project.

Trustees noted the process and asked to be kept informed of the outcomes.

#### **700 THE MUSEUM'S RELATIONSHIP WITH THE BBC (TP 03/06)**

Ms Ament introduced paper TP 03/06, which outlined the framework for a new and mutually beneficial collaboration to bring together The Natural History Museum and the BBC, as two significant and well-respected players in the field of natural history. This intention had been made public at the recent launch of the 'Life of Mammals' exhibition, staged temporarily at the Museum in early January. Ms Ament stressed the potential within such an initiative to make great steps, through combined effort, towards inspiring commitment to the natural world and in increasing public understanding and engagement. She also emphasised the added benefit of enabling the Museum to increase its activities to raise public awareness of natural history through a series of high-profile events and programmes to include both TV and radio exposure.

Following discussion, Trustees endorsed the framework as outlined and asked to be kept informed in more detail of how the partnership was developing in due course. The Director was also able to confirm that Sir David Attenborough, although a key figure in the BBC's natural history programmes, had also been particularly supportive of the Museum, having already publicly endorsed the Darwin Centre and agreed to host a fundraising event for Phase Two in April 2003.

#### **701 INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT (TP 03/07)**

Ms Candlin introduced paper TP 03/07, which set out a policy for achieving a system of integrated pest management (IPM) across the Museum. She reported that since the HSE ban on production and sale of the pesticide *dichlorvos* early in 2002, the Museum had been working towards a change in practices across the Museum to provide the best care and protection of the collections against damage by pests. Since the collections were so fundamental to the core activities and mission of the Museum, achievement of IPM had been rated as annual Corporate Risk number one during 2002-03.

Professor Hassell enquired whether there was an alternative to *dichlorvos* which might be used. Ms Candlin replied that some chemical deterrents were available, solely for expert application, but that the main thrust of the policy was to change working practices, and raise awareness amongst everyone, in order to reduce ingress of pests in the first place. Although Professor McGlade was concerned about the impact of the disposal of residues from *dichlorvos*, Ms Candlin was able to assure Trustees that this issue was covered by the Environmental Policy that they would have the opportunity to consider at a future meeting.

With these comments, Trustees approved the Integrated Pest Management policy and noted the programme of work that was being implemented to achieve it. Trustees asked for a progress report to be given in due course.

#### **702 FINANCE COMMITTEE REPORT**

Mr Stocken, as Chair of the Finance Committee, gave a brief verbal summary of the meeting held on 5 February 2003. He reported that the Committee had decided in favour of a Public Finance Initiative (PFI) project with regard to the Boilerhouse and approved a mixed development of the storage facility at Wandsworth.

Trustees noted the report.

#### **703 AUDIT COMMITTEE REPORT**

Sir Richard Sykes, as Chair of the Audit Committee, gave a verbal summary of the meeting held on 9 December 2002. The Committee had received and approved the annual audited accounts and considered the Museum's maintenance and engineering contract with Asea Brown Boveri (ABB). The contract was due to come to an end and it was reported that although ABB would cover the period of changeover to another supplier, the company would not be re-tendering for the work themselves.

Trustees noted the report.

#### **704 REPORT ON MUSEUM ACTIVITIES (TP 03/08)**

**Exhibitions.** Ms Ament described the Special Exhibitions Programme for 2003, which will include a family exhibition based around recent research into the life style and behaviour of Tyrannosaurs, Wildlife Photographer of the Year and a collaboration with the Institute of Sculptors.

**Darwin Centre.** Trustees were shown the recent advertising campaign for Darwin Centre

**Tring.** Trustees noted that the museum at Tring was performing very well, with a 20% rise in visitor figures compared to the same period last year.

**ECSITE.** The Director reported on the European Collaborative on Science, Technology and Engineering (ECSITE) annual conference held in November 2002. The Museum had been the primary host of the conference, with many events taking place on site in South Kensington. With the conference both highly successful and well attended, the ECSITE group was likely to make an increasingly large impact on the scientific community in future years.

**705 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION (TP 03/09)**

Trustees noted the performance information.

**706 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Professor McGlade informed Trustees that the Museum, in partnership with The Earth Centre, and ten other science centres across the country, had submitted an expression of interest to the recent call for a National Science Centre from Wellcome, for funding for Science Learning. She would keep Trustees informed of any progress with the bid.

**707 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 20 May 2003 at 10.00 am at The Natural History Museum.

*NB Items given in italics will not included in the version of the minutes that is published on internet, since they include either personal details of living individuals or affect the commercial interests of the Museum.*