

No 254

**THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**

**AT A MEETING ON**

**TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2018**

**AT 09.00 A.M.**

**AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**

**Present**

**TRUSTEES**

Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint (in the Chair)

Professor Sir John Beddington CMG FRS

Dame Frances Cairncross DBE FRSE

Professor Sir John Holman KBE

Anand Mahindra (joined the meeting by phone)

Hilary Newiss

Simon Patterson (joined the meeting by phone for item 1956)

Professor Sir Robert Stephen John Sparks CMG FRS CBE (joined the meeting by phone)

Professor Dame Janet Thornton DBE FRS

**In Attendance**

Sir Michael Dixon (Director and Executive Board member)

Neil Greenwood (Director of Finance and Corporate Services and Executive Board member)

Clare Matterson CBE (Director of Engagement and Executive Board member)

Fiona McWilliams (Director of Development and Communications and Executive Board member)

Professor Ian Owens (Director of Science and Executive Board member)

Frances Allen (Board Secretary)

Dr Alex Burch (Head of Exhibitions, Learning and Outreach)

Rachael Casstles (Head of Internal Affairs)

Clare Laws (Head of Resources and Planning)

**Preliminary**

**1949 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Professor Christopher Gilligan, Mr Robert Noel and Dr Kim L Winsler.

**1950 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS (TP 18/01)**

Declarations of interest and changes to the Register of Interests were made and recorded by the Secretary to the Board.

**1951 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 21 NOVEMBER 2017**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Trustees held on 21 November 2017 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

**1952 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING OF 21 NOVEMBER 2017 (TP 18/02)**

Museums' Review: DCMS propose to establish a number of working groups to take forward the recommendations of the Museums' Review. Particular attention will focus on the imperative to find efficiency savings through shared working and, in this context, the NHM has been invited to contribute to the working group's review. The Director will keep the Board updated on progress.

Commercial Assessment: An external consultant had been engaged to assess the NHM's commercial operations to analyse performance and where future emphasis should be focussed. The consultant had made some pertinent observations and strong recommendations which, together with actions for improvement, will be evaluated by the Executive Board. The incoming Director of Engagement, Clare Matterson, will also spend time with the consultant to review proposals in more detail.

## **Corporate items:**

### **1953 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Dippy on Tour: The Chair was pleased to report that *Dippy on Tour* had premiered at the Dorchester County Museum on Friday 9 February to great acclaim. The launch was well attended and future ticket sales are beyond expectations. The Chair and Executive were particularly impressed with the imaginative programme that the Dorchester County Museum had developed around the arrival of Dippy, which included talks and lectures throughout the county of Dorset. This is a great start to *Dippy on Tour* and demonstrates the Natural History Museum's (NHM) commitment to the regions and support of the Real World Science programme. The Board wished to thank the Garfield Weston Foundation for its support and also to extend congratulations to the team responsible for the *Dippy on Tour* project.

The Board recognised the importance of following *Dippy on Tour* with another road show in order to maintain momentum. Dr Alex Burch (Head of Exhibitions, Learning and Outreach) reassured the Board that a rolling programme will be developed to ensure continuance of our commitment to natural history and the regions.

### **1954 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (TP 18/03)**

The Director highlighted the following items:

DCMS Corporate Governance self-assessment exercise: In response to a recommendation in the Museums' Review, the NHM had been requested by DCMS to undertake a corporate governance self-assessment exercise. The completed survey will be submitted in April 2018.

With respect to governance, the Board confirmed that it was content with the current procedure that the Board undergoes an external review every three years and in the intervening years the Chair appraises each Board member. The Chair also undertook to consider how Trustees could meet informally on a more frequent basis.

Museum attendance: Following the rather disappointing recovery in August after the launch of the reimagined Hintze Hall, attendance in the latter months of 2017 has been ahead of the prior year, though January was somewhat disappointing. Attendance figures during the weekend preceding half-term were very encouraging and it is hoped that the pre-Easter family-focussed marketing campaign will further boost visitor numbers. The Executive will continue to closely monitor visitor attendance at the NHM.

## **Appendices:**

Board Assurance Framework: The Risk Management and Board Assurance Framework, previously reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee, was presented to the Board in its entirety. The template presents all major risks identified by the Executive and provides assurance to the Board that these risks are being appropriately managed in the forthcoming year. The Risk Universe template runs in parallel and defines all areas of activity and associated risks. This template is evaluated by the management team to determine whether any risks should be upgraded as an additional risk and/or should be scored. This is reviewed by the Audit and Risk Committee on a quarterly basis.

It was agreed that the Risk Management and Board Assurance Framework, together with a one-page summary identifying key issues, should be reviewed by the Board on an annual basis.

KPI report for Q3: The Board recommended that the number of KPIs be reduced to focus on a smaller number of key KPIs linked to the Strategic Plan. The revised template will be reviewed when it has been produced using 2018/19 data. This will be at the Board meeting in July.

Digital dashboard: The Digital Dashboard presented to the Board highlighted key aspects of the implementation of the NHM's digital strategy and charts progress against target. Simon Patterson confirmed that the digital teams are working very hard and making real progress. The Board will be kept informed of progress.

#### **1955 FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR THE PERIOD APRIL - DECEMBER 2017 (TP 18/04)**

The Board reviewed the financial report and revised forecast based on the position at the end of the third quarter. Neil Greenwood (Director of Finance and Corporate Services) outlined the measures introduced to protect the level of operating surplus and the General Fund balance.

#### **1956 BUDGET FY2018/19 (TP 18/05)**

The Executive presented the proposed budget for FY2018/19 for approval by the Board. In responding to the current challenging economic climate, the Executive had imposed tight cost control measures across each directorate and had removed all 'optimism bias' from commercial forecasts in order to produce a budget that delivered the required operating surplus and General Reserve. This spotlight on activity had helped to identify those strategic priorities that should be protected and those that should have reduced emphasis. Furthermore, the Executive had rejected those cost control measures that would be too restricting to long-term objectives. In considering the budget, the Board particularly asked the Executive to protect the NHM's participation in national and international network projects.

The Board approved the budget, subject to the General Reserve position being maintained at £4m or above.

#### **1957 SCIENCE STRATEGY DEVELOPMENT: AN UPDATE (TP 18/06)**

Professor Ian Owens (Director of Science) provided an update on the development of cross-Museum strategic themes and the framework for a new Science Strategy.

##### *Strategic themes:*

The recommendations of the science review was the catalyst to developing a long-term vision for the NHM based on cross-Museum themes that will be used to drive a deeper integration between science, public engagement, fundraising and communication. In response, a cross-Museum working group had identified a series of strategic themes grouped around the three areas of *Origins*, *Diversity* and *Systems*. The overarching vision that had emerged is for the NHM to be both a leading scientific institute and public voice on some of the big global issues of the day. The Board agreed that the NHM should play a more prominent role in addressing global issues and, whilst not a campaigning organisation, it should be prepared to be the authoritative voice on key issues using evidence-based facts.

##### *Science Strategy:*

Internal and external consultation had taken place to inform the framework for the development of a new Science Strategy; Professor Owens summarised the outcomes of the consultation

##### *NHM Strategy:*

The creation of a coherent long-term vision for the NHM had highlighted the need to develop a new Museum Strategy to replace the current *Strategy to 2020*. This was even more compelling given that the landscape has changed since its publication with the imperative now firmly focussed on the need to adopt a more commercial approach to the NHM's longer-term development balanced with maintaining scientific integrity.

Active participation of the Board is an important strand of the strategy's development and the suggestion was made that a Trustee strategy working group be established (comprising chairs of the advisory groups) to act as the vehicle to help take forward the strategy. Trustees welcomed this proposal and the Chair emphasised that the structure of the group should not be so rigid that individuals beyond the Board cannot invited to participate.

The Board agreed that the time was right to produce a new strategy, but encouraged the Executive to develop one with a longer lifespan to 2030. Trustees felt, however, that the projected launch date of spring 2019 may present a challenge for the incoming Director of Engagement and suggested that a progress report be presented at the Trustees' strategy day in September at which point a decision can be made on a final production timetable.

**Items for Approval:**

**1958 COLLECTIONS REQUEST FOR RETURNS (TP 18/07 AND TP 18/08)**

The Board of Trustees discussed Dr Sarah Long's (Museum Registrar) paper. After careful consideration, and taking account of the risks and ethical issues, the Board of Trustees felt that Dr Long's excellent paper presented a very compelling case for the return and agreed to support the recommendations, as follows:

**South Australia**

For the request for return made by the Australian Government, Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation, Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority and the Nukunu People's Council for human remains from South Australia, Trustees agreed to the return of the remains of all 30 individuals that were requested, as follows:

- Eight individuals PAHR279, PAHR299, PAHR301, PAHR323, PAHR378, PAHR379, PAHR384 and PAHR414 from the Murray River area, or showing cultural modifications typical of the Ngarrindjeri people, to be returned to the Ngarrindjeri Regional Authority;
- Three individuals PAHR 289, PAHR317 and PAHR606 from the Flinders Range area to be returned to Nukunu People's Council Inc;
- Two individual hair samples PAHR196 and PAHR212 from Upper Miocray Reserve, Adelaide (Fowler's Bay) to be returned to the Far West Coast Aboriginal Corporation;
- Seventeen individuals provenanced to South Australia or lands now within the state of South Australia to be transferred to the temporary care of the National Museum of Australia pending further research to enable them to be returned to the right community.

Trustees also noted their decision that at their meeting of 16th November 2006 they decided to return PAHR380, a single mandible from South Australia, which was found to have been illegally exported from Australia in 1913. It was understood from communication with the Australian Government that this is intended for return to representatives of the Narungga Community.

In addition to these remains, the NHM identified further remains from South Australia whilst auditing the collection. These comprised one cranium with a mandible, and five bone samples. These remains were not registered as part of the NHM collection. Trustees agreed to their return and to the proposal that they be handled in the following way:

- The cranium and mandible were transferred to the NHM from the Wellcome Collection in 1982: archival research and physical examination confirmed that this individual is from the Eyre Peninsula, South Australia. Collection dates from c.1933 (the date of donation to the Kyancutta Museum). As an unregistered item this individual would be transferred to the National Museum of Australia to enable provenancing research to determine the appropriate community for return.
- The five bone samples were all sent to the NHM on loan in the 1960s by the South Australia Museum. They date from between 5700 yBP to 600 yBP. It was proposed that because these samples were sent on loan, that they should be returned to the South Australia Museum for appropriate action unless advised otherwise by the Australian Government.

**New Zealand**

For the request for return by the Hokotehi Moriori Trust and Karanga Aotearoa, Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa for the remains of individuals of Moriori origin from the Chatham Islands, Trustees agreed to the return of the 111 Kōimi Tangata (Moriori ancestral remains) that were requested and listed in the paper.

Two further individuals, PAHR1983 and PAHR1803, were associated with New Zealand but not defined as being of Moriori origin. While they have not been requested for return at present, Trustees felt that these remains should be returned to Te Papa with agreement whilst further provenance work is undertaken.

**1959 HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT – OCTOBER-DECEMBER 2017 (Q3) (TP 18/09)**

The Board of Trustees noted the report, commenting that the wording of some of the commentaries needed clearer explanation in future reports.

**Committee reports:**

**1960 REPORT AND MINUTES OF THE SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 DECEMBER 2017 (TP 18/10)**

Professor Sir Stephen Sparks (Chair of the Science Advisory Committee) reported on the December meeting, which had focussed on science activity and suggestions for the science strategy.

**1961 REPORT AND MINUTES OF THE PROPERTY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2018 (TP 18/11)**

The Board noted Robert Noel's (Chair of the Property Committee) report of the high-level work currently being undertaken by the Property Committee.

**1962 REPORT FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 30 JANUARY 2018 (TP 18/12)**

Hilary Newiss (Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee) confirmed that the NHM is well prepared for the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation in May. The Director will include in his May report to the Board a written assurance from the NHM's solicitors that the NHM's approach to GDPR approach is correct.

**1963 REPORT AND MINUTES OF THE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 12 FEBRUARY 2018**

Dame Frances Cairncross (Chair of the NHM Development Advisory Committee) reported on the February meeting, highlighting the following:

Due diligence: Discussion took place on the due diligence procedure relating to partners and donors to ensure it is robust and in good alignment with existing policies (e.g. Third Party Engagement and Gift Acceptance policies). Some recommendations were made and this topic will be discussed further the July meeting of the Board.

**1964 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**1965 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS (TP 18/13)**

The rolling agenda for future meetings was noted.

**1966 EVENTS DIARY (TP 18/14)**

The Board of Trustees noted the contents of the report.

**1967 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

**2018:**

- 24 May (Birmingham)
- 3 July (Annual Staff Summer party in the evening)
- 18 September (Annual Trustees' Strategy Day – all day)
- 20 November

**2019:**

- 19 February
- 21 May
- 2 July (Annual Staff Summer party in the evening)
- 24 September (Annual Trustees' Strategy Day)
- 19 November

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'S. Chen'.