

**THE BRITISH MUSEUM**  
**MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES**  
**5 MARCH 2009**  
**HELD AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM**

**PRESENT**

Mr Niall FitzGerald KBE (Chairman from item 3.4)  
Ms Karen Armstrong  
Lord Broers  
Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe (from item 4)  
Mr Francis Finlay  
Dame Liz Forgan  
Miss Val Gooding  
Mr Antony Gormley  
Ms Bonnie Greer  
Mr George Iacobescu  
Dr Olga Kennard  
Baroness Helena Kennedy (from item 3.5)  
Mrs Edmée Leventis  
Mr David Norgrove  
Sir John Tusa (Acting Chairman items 1 to 3.4)

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Neil MacGregor	Director
Andrew Burnett	Deputy Director
Chris Yates	Director of Finance and Administration
Mark Bates	Governance and Policy Manager (Secretary)

**Item 3**

David Lindsell	North West Development Committee Chairman
Tony Wilson	NWD Senior Project Manager
Alec Shaw	NWD Project Manager
Heidi Weeks	NWD Project Co-ordinator
Graham Stirk	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (to 3.4)
John McElgunn	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (to 3.4)
Carmel Lewin	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (to 3.4)
Nigel Sunter	Purcell Miller Tritton (to 3.4)
Chris Miele	Montague Evans (to 3.4)
Sukie Hemming	Director of Capital Development

**Item 5**

Justin Morris	Head of Strategic Planning and Collections Services
John Curtis	Keeper Middle East
Philip Marshall	Head of Commercial Department

**1. APOLOGIES**

- 1.1 Apologies had been received from Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Professor Sir Christopher Bayly, Sir Ronald Cohen, Mr Stephen Green, Mrs Penny Hughes, Mr Richard Lambert, Lord Powell and Lord Stern

## **2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

- 2.1 Barry Cunliffe had declared a conflict of interest in relation to the North West Development because of his role as acting Chairman of English Heritage and was not present for item 3.
- 2.2 No other conflicts of interest were declared.

## **3. NORTH WEST DEVELOPMENT**

- 3.1 The Board were asked to agree that the planning application for the North West Development Project be submitted to the London Borough of Camden in April 2009, and to approve additional expenditure until September 2009.
- 3.2 David Lindsell summarised developments since the Board had approved the scope of the project on 27 September 2007. The North West Development Committee affirmed that the final proposed design met the project brief in that it would provide: (1) a special exhibition gallery of at least 1100 sq m., with appropriate support spaces; (2) a logistics hub to facilitate the handling of objects being loaned to and by the Museum; (3) new laboratories to accommodate the Department of Conservation and Science; and (4) a storage space of 6000 sq. m. for the Museum's collection, partly to house the ethnographic collection. The Committee also believed that the design had strong intrinsic qualities which complemented the existing Museum buildings and which related well to the surrounding public realm. The Committee recommended the scheme to the Board.
- 3.3 The Director and Deputy Director also endorsed the scheme.
- 3.4 Graham Stirk gave a presentation explaining how he had reached his final design for the building. Nigel Sunter explained how the new buildings would be integrated into the existing building, and how the public and staff would access them.
- 3.5 The Board discussed the financing of the project, and Sukie Hemming presented proposals for fundraising packages which had the potential to attract sponsors.
- 3.6 The Trustees, including those absent with the exception of Barry Cunliffe, were unanimous in their support for the proposed design. They were satisfied that risks and budget were being managed effectively, and had a high degree of confidence in the internal and external project team members. The Board concluded that the planning application should proceed, and approved additional expenditure as recommended by the NWDC until September. The Board would reconsider the project at its July meeting to decide if the project should commence in the autumn as planned, subject to planning consent. At this point, security of funding for the full project would be key.
- 3.7 The Chairman concluded by warmly thanking David Lindsell and the project team for their work.

## **4. LOAN APPROVAL**

- 4.1 A loan to the International Museum of the Horse, Lexington, Kentucky, USA was approved.

## **5. SHEIKH ZAYED NATIONAL MUSEUM**

- 5.1 The Board were asked to approve the proposal to engage with the Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), Abu Dhabi to support them in the development of the Sheikh Zayed National Museum & Library (SZNM).
- 5.2 The Director explained how the proposal was fully in line with the Museum's international role, and coherent with the work it was already doing in China and Africa. It offered new opportunities to engage in the strategically important region of the Middle East.
- 5.3 Justin Morris and John Curtis presented the proposed design and concept of the SZNM, and the scope of the services that TDIC was seeking from the British Museum. The SZNM was due to open in September 2013 and would present the history of the United Arab Emirates in the context of the wider region. Its permanent galleries would seek to present a history of the Middle East for a Middle Eastern public drawing on local collections alongside loans from elsewhere and a programme of special exhibitions. It would be open to all and operate on a free admission basis. The proposed services encompassed advice and training on all aspects of the SZNM's development and operations, along with long- and short-term loans and exhibitions.
- 5.4 The basic elements of the 10-year contract, how the Museum would develop the capacity to deliver, and the actions proposed to manage and mitigate risks were fully discussed. It was made clear that the Board would have the opportunity to approve decisions on loans during the life of the contract.
- 5.5 All Trustees supported the proposal, and the Chairman reported that those absent had also given him their support. The Chairman summed up by concluding that the Board was satisfied that the financial risks had been very well-handled by Justin Morris and Philip Marshall, and that the Museum's reputation was protected by a very clear and robust rationale. The project would help strengthen the Museum's position as a museum of the world; would underpin the Museum's international programme; would create better career opportunities for Museum staff; and had the potential to contribute to creating stability in the Middle East by enhancing cross-cultural and inter-community understanding. The Board therefore agreed that the Museum should contract with TDIC to deliver the proposed services to the SZNM.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 6.1 There was no other business.

**Date of next Board meeting: Thursday 26 March 2009, 3.00 pm**

\_\_\_\_\_ Chairman