

THE BRITISH MUSEUM
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
HELD ON 6TH JULY 2006
AT
THE BRITISH MUSEUM

PRESENT

Mr Niall FitzGerald KBE
(Chairman)
Mr Hasan Askari
Lord Broers
Sir Barry Cunliffe
Mr Francis Finlay
Miss Val Gooding
Mr Stephen Green
Ms Bonnie Greer

Dr Olga Kennard
Baroness Kennedy QC
Mrs Edmée Leventis
Mr David Lindsell
Mr David Norgrove
Mr Vikram Seth
Sir Keith Thomas
Sir John Tusa

Apologies had been received from Chief Emeka Anayaoku, Sir Ronald Cohen, Mr Richard Lambert, Lord Powell, Mr Eric Salama

IN ATTENDANCE

Mr Neil MacGregor	- Director
Dr Andrew Burnett	- Deputy Director
Dr Christopher Herring	- Director of Finance and Administration
Ms Zoe Hancock	- Head of Planning and Programmes
Miss Heidi Weeks	- Directorate Manager

The reports and minutes referred to below may contain exempt information within the meaning of Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

1.1 Baroness Kennedy declared an interest as the President of The School of African and Oriental Studies (SOAS).

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS AND MATTERS ARISING

2.1 *Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees: 23 March 2006*

The Minutes were approved and the Chairman was authorized to sign them as a true record.

2.2 In reference to minute 2.5 the Chairman reported that he had invited Sir John Tusa and Miss Val Gooding to remain Deputy Chairmen for a period of twelve months. They had both agreed. The Chairman also reported he had invited Mr Richard Lambert to be a third Deputy Chairman. He had agreed.

2.3 In reference to minute 5.1 the Director confirmed that the Tasmanian ash bundles were expected to be handed over to the Tasmanian Aboriginal Centre in September 2006.

2.4 In reference to minute 9.3 the Director informed the Board that the Museum had fulfilled its recruitment commitment to the National Council, Arts and Heritage for the State of Qatar (NCAH). Discussions about future cooperation were planned.

3. TRUSTEE BUSINESS

3.1 The Chairman formally thanked Mr Hasan Askari on behalf of Trustees for his role on the Museum's Board during the past seven years, and particularly for his contribution to the Audit Committee.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

4.1 The Chairman acknowledged the guidance given to him by Sir John Boyd in preparation for his taking on the role of Chairman.

4.2 The Chairman informed the Board that he hoped to meet all Trustees individually before the next Board meeting in October. He would also meet key members of the Museum's management team and external stakeholders.

5. AUDIT COMMITTEE'S ANNUAL REPORT

5.1 Mr David Norgrove and Mr Hasan Askari presented the Audit Committee's annual report.

5.2 It was agreed that the Audit Committee had put in considerable effort to oversee the state of internal control in the Museum and that the process had improved greatly in recent years.

5.3 Mr Norgrove, Chairman of the Committee reaffirmed to the Board that fundraising would need the continuing attention of the Standing Committee and also the full Board.

Action: Directorate

5.4 Mr Norgrove identified a concern that the current senior management structure might be strained, given the volume of future work.

5.5 It was recommended that the Board should receive more information on Capital Expenditure. This would be provided in future.

Action: Directorate

MATTER REQUIRING BOARD APPROVAL

6. CHANGES TO THE TERMS OF THE BMDT DEED

6.1 The Board endorsed the recommendation to appoint Mr Niall FitzGerald KBE as a Trustee of the British Museum Development Trust (BMDT).

6.2 The Board endorsed the recommendation that the BMDT be authorised to amend the terms of the Declaration of Trust dated 29 March 1985 to reduce the minimum number of Trustees and quorum for meetings to two and to enable resolutions of the Trustees made in writing and signed by all of them to be as

valid and effective as if the same had been passed in a meeting of the BMDT.

7. ANNUAL REPORT AND ACCOUNTS

- 7.1 Dr Chris Herring presented the Annual Report and Accounts.
- 7.2 The Board was informed that a provision of £600,000 for the lease payment on a BCo property (43 Russell Square) had been omitted from the draft circulated to Trustees in the hope that the matter might be resolved. This amount had now been incorporated.
- 7.3 It was recommended that in future routine maintenance and gallery improvements should be linked as one sum, and that Space Planning be shown separate from this amount. An appendix to this year's report would break the figures down in this way. Future reports would make the distinction.
- Action: CH**
- 7.4 The Board agreed to convene a smaller Sub Committee of the Board to approve the final version of the Annual Report and Accounts. Members of the Sub Committee would be: Mr H Askari, Mr D Lindsell, Mr D Norgrove.
- 7.5 The Chairman's and Director's forewords for the Annual Report were being drafted.

8. DESIGNATION OF RESERVES

- 8.1 Trustees agreed to designate £50 million from unrestricted revenue and capital reserves for the space planning programme.

9. LOAN TO MUSEUM FÜR VÖLKERKUNDE, VIENNA

- 9.1 *Loan to Museum für Völkerkunde, Vienna:* The Board approved the loan for the exhibition: *Benin: A West African Kingdom* subject to there being immunity from seizure.

10. ACQUISITIONS REGISTER

- 10.1 The Deputy Director presented highlights from the Acquisitions Register 2005-2006. Copies of the full report would be available to Trustees upon request.
- 10.2 Trustees acknowledged the work of the Keepers in the securing of acquisitions and agreed that the work reflected in the Register was an excellent achievement.

11. FORTHCOMING 18 MONTHS

- 11.1 The Director updated Trustees on current and forthcoming Museum activity.

Exhibitions: A total of 92,000 people had visited the exhibition *The Warren Cup: Sexuality in Ancient Greece* in Room 3 when it closed on 2 July.

The extended opening hours for the exhibition *Michelangelo Drawings: Closer to the Master* proved extremely successful. The extension to opening hours was a

constructive experiment in establishing whether people would visit Bloomsbury late at night. Total visitor figures to the exhibition reached 152,000.

Both the *Michelangelo* and the *Word into Art: Artists of the Modern Middle East* exhibitions have been very successful in reaching new publics.

First Emperor Exhibition: The Director reported on his recent visit to Xi'an, during which letters of intent were signed with the Cultural Relics Bureau confirming they would lend 22 Grade I objects for a seven month period from September 2007.

The application to Camden to temporarily redevelop the space in the Round Reading Room would be submitted by the end of July.

12. SPACE PLANNING

12.1 The Director presented the Space Plan outlines and recommendations. A full discussion on this subject will take place at the Board meeting in October.

12.2 The key priorities for the coming years were identified as:

- building of the collections houses, conservation laboratories, office accommodation
- temporary redevelopment of the Round Reading Room for the First Emperor exhibition
- development of a new temporary exhibition space
- gallery improvements

12.3 It was recommended that a forthcoming Trustee workshop should focus on collections management and storage options. **Action: Directorate**

12.4 The Space Planning Board would consider the role of an architect in the building works and make recommendations to the Standing Committee, via the Space Planning Board.

12.5 The Board noted how pleasing it was to see this project moving forward.

13. MANAGEMENT REPORT

13.1 *People*: The Director informed Trustees that Mr Robert Knox, Keeper of the Department of Asia, would retire at the end of August. Ms Jan Stuart, currently Chinese expert at the Freer and Sackler Gallery in Washington DC, had been appointed as Keeper and would take up post in October 2006.

The Director reported that Mr Gareth Binns, Keeper of Learning and Information, had resigned to take up a new post and would leave the Museum at the end of August 2006. The appointment of the Director of Public Understanding post had been frozen.

13.2 *Human Remains*: The Deputy Director informed Trustees that a request had come from the Te Papa Museum, New Zealand, with the support of the New Zealand Government, for the return of a number of preserved heads and skeletal remains. The receipt of the claim had been acknowledged and a fuller report

would be made to the Board in October.

The claim made in January 2006 from the Haida people of North America still requires the endorsement of the National Government before further action can be taken.

14. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

- 14.1 The Minutes of the Investment Sub Committee meeting held on 4 April 2006 were noted.
- 14.2 The Minutes of the Standing Committee meeting held on 27 April were noted.
- 14.3 The Minutes of the Investment Sub Committee meeting held on 26 May 2006 were noted.
- 14.4 The Minutes of the Nominations and Governance Committee meeting held on the 8 June were noted.
- 14.5 The Minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of the 14 June were noted.
- 14.6 The Minutes of the Standing Committee meeting of the 15 June were noted.
- 14.7 The Minutes of the BMDT Board meeting of the 15 June were noted.

15. SCHEDULE OF TRUSTEES' BUSINESS 2007

- 15.1 The schedule of Trustees' business was noted.

16. SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 16.1 The schedule of forthcoming events was noted.

Date of next Board Meeting:

Friday 6 October, Amsterdam

Chairman