

THE BRITISH MUSEUM
MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES
26 MARCH 2009
HELD AT THE BRITISH MUSEUM

PRESENT

Mr Niall FitzGerald KBE (Chairman)
Ms Karen Armstrong
Professor Sir Christopher Bayly
Lord Broers
Sir Ronald Cohen (to Item 10)
Professor Sir Barry Cunliffe
Mr Francis Finlay
Dame Liz Forgan
Miss Val Gooding
Mr Stephen Green
Ms Bonnie Greer
Mrs Penny Hughes
Mr George Iacobescu
Dr Olga Kennard
Baroness Kennedy
Mrs Edmée Leventis
Mr David Norgrove
Lord Powell (to Item 7)
Lord Stern

IN ATTENDANCE

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| Neil MacGregor | Director |
| Andrew Burnett | Deputy Director |
| Chris Yates | Director of Finance and Administration |
| Stan Miranda | Investment Sub-committee (Item 1) |
| Joanna Mackle | Director of Public Engagement (Item 7) |
| Jane Whittaker | Head of Finance (Items 9 and 10) |
| Maria Muller | Director of Development (Item 9) |
| Justin Morris | Head of Strategic Planning and Collections Services (Item 10) |
| Mark Bates | Governance and Policy Manager (Secretary) |

1. INVESTMENT SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

1.1 Sir Ronald Cohen and Stan Miranda presented the Investment Sub-committee report, including the investment strategy. The Board endorsed the strategy.

2. APOLOGIES

2.1 Apologies had been received from Chief Emeka Anyaoku, Mr Richard Lambert and Mr Antony Gormley.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

3.1 Barry Cunliffe declared an interest in the North West Development as acting Chairman of English Heritage.

3.2 Liz Forgan reported that she was no longer a non-executive member of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport Executive Board.

4. MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS HELD ON 20 NOVEMBER 2008 AND 5 MARCH 2009

4.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 20 November 2008 were approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a true record.

4.2 Matters arising from 20 November meeting:

- Item 9.1 – The Director reported that one potential partnership in the Middle East would not be going ahead.

4.3 The minutes of the extraordinary Board meeting held on 5 March 2009 were approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a true record, subject to an amendment to paragraph 3.5 making it clear that Barry Cunliffe had not expressed a view on the North West Development Project.

4.4 Matters arising from 5 March meeting:

- Item 3 – The Deputy Director reported that English Heritage supported the North West Development proposals, and that the planning application would be submitted to Camden Council in mid-April.
- Item 5 – The Director reported that a contract with the Tourism Development & Investment Company for the Sheikh Zayed National Museum and Library would be signed shortly. David Norgrove advised that the Audit Committee had concluded that the project's risks were being properly addressed and well-handled.

5. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

5.1 The Chairman advised Trustees of plans to involve them in fundraising activities.

6. MANAGEMENT REPORT

6.1 The Board noted the contents of the report, and the Director highlighted:

- The successful opening of the Michael Cohen Nebamun Gallery in January which had attracted very positive press coverage and good visitor numbers.
- The Paul and Jill Ruddock Medieval Gallery, opened by David Cameron on 24 March.
- A major exhibition at the Royal Academy of Kuniyoshi prints which had recently been donated to the Museum by Professor Arthur Miller via the American Friends.
- The publication of an exemplary catalogue of the Museum's Italian Renaissance ceramics.
- Visits to the Babylon exhibition which ended on 15 March were 162,000, far exceeding forecast.

6.2 The Director also reported that the Museum had been able to stay open on 2 February following the heavy snowfall, and that the Museum had been very busy. The Trustees conveyed their thanks to staff for keeping the Museum open under such difficult circumstances.

7. ADVOCACY

7.1 The Board noted the contents of the Advocacy Report, and the Director of Public Engagement highlighted:

- The preparations for the forthcoming *Garden and Cosmos* exhibition.
- A forthcoming press trip to Mexico in advance of the *Moctezuma* exhibition.
- Plans for the public announcement of the North West Development project.

8. BOARD PERFORMANCE

8.1 The Chairman reported that the Nominations and Governance Committee had discussed the outcome of the Board performance assessment for 2008 at a meeting that morning, and had agreed a number of actions for the coming year. Overall, it was agreed that the Board was performing very effectively.

Action: Governance Manager

9. MANAGEMENT ACCOUNTS

9.1 Jane Whittaker presented the Quarter 3 Management Accounts and a summary of issues arising.

9.2 Maria Muller provided an update on fundraising.

10. OPERATING PLAN AND BUDGET 2009/10

10.1 Justin Morris presented the Operating Plan 2008/09 Forecast Outturn report, the results of which had informed the development of the 2009/10 Operating Plan.

10.2 The Trustees discussed and approved the Operating Plan for 2009/10.

10.3 Jane Whittaker presented the Budget for 2009/10, which was approved by the Board.

11. AMENDMENTS TO GOVERNOR JAMES ALBERT NOE AND MRS ANNA GRAY NOE FELLOWSHIP AND LECTURE DEED OF TRUST

11.1 The Board approved a supplemental deed to the trust.

12. LOANS

12.1 The Board approved loans to:

- Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum, Glasgow
- Museu Nacional de Arte Antiga, Lisbon
- Bayerische Staatsgemäldesammlungen, Munich

13. MODERN BOLIVIAN MATERIAL

13.1 The Board approved the recommendation that the Museum should dispose of a group of modern Bolivian material under section 5(2) of the British Museum Act 1963.

The material consists of unworked organic material and associated items collected in Bolivia in 1985. The material cannot be protected against pests and fungal deterioration, and has no intrinsic aesthetic or commercial value.

14. MINUTES OF COMMITTEES

- 14.1 Minutes of the Standing Committee meetings held on 20 October and 11 December 2008, and of the North West Development Committee meetings held on 17 November and 5 December 2008 and 14 January, 27 January and 12 February 2009 were noted.

15. SCHEDULE OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

- 15.1 The Board noted the events schedule.

16. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 16.1 The Chairman announced that Mark Bates had been taken on as a permanent employee of the Museum, and would continue in his role as Governance Manager.
- 16.2 The Chairman announced that he had appointed Bonnie Greer as a Deputy Chair to replace Sir John Tusa. The Board warmly welcomed this appointment.

MEETING OF BM GREAT COURT LTD MEMBERS

17. AMENDMENT TO MEMORANDUM AND ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

- 17.1 The members approved proposed amendments to the BM Great Court Ltd memorandum and articles of association.

Date of next Board meeting: Thursday 2 July 2009, 3.00 pm

_____ Chairman