Minutes

The British Museum
Board of Trustees Meeting
27-28 September 2013, City Hotel, Cambridge

Present

Mr Niall FitzGerald KBE, Chairman
Ms Karen Armstrong
The Hon Nigel Boardman
Professor Sir Christopher Bayly
Ms Cheryl Carolus
Ms Patricia Cumper
Dame Liz Forgan
Professor Clive Gamble
Mr Antony Gormley
Ms Penny Hughes
Ms Wasfi Kani
Mr James Lupton
Sir Deryck Maughan
Mr John Micklethwait
Sir Paul Nurse
Mr Gavin Patterson
Ms Ahdaf Soueif
Lord Sassoon
Lord Stern
Lord Turner (by phone for Part 1)
Baroness Wheatcroft

In Attendance

Neil MacGregor
Director
Joanna Mackle
Deputy Director
Jonathan Williams
Deputy Director
Christopher Yates
Deputy Director
Marilyn Standley
Director of Operations & Projects
Mark Bates
Governance & Planning Manager
Ms Bonnie Greer (Item 6)
1. **Welcome and apologies**

   1.1 The Chairman warmly welcomed new Trustees: Ms Cheryl Carolus who had been appointed by Her Majesty The Queen for a term of four years from 30 June; and Ms Patricia Cumper, Ms Wasfi Kani, Sir Deryck Maughan and Lord Sassoon who had been appointed by the Prime Minister for terms of four years from 27 September.

   1.2 Apologies had been received from Sir George Iacobescu, Sir Martin Sorrell and Professor Amartya Sen.

2. **Minutes of Meeting**

   2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 4 July 2013 were approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a true record.

   2.2 Matters arising:

      2.2.1 Item 3.2, Register of interests guidance: the revised guidance had been circulated to Trustees.

      2.2.2 Item 5.2, Spending Review: Christopher Yates provided an update on the proposed regulatory reforms and the storage review.

      2.2.3 Item 7.1, Acquisitions: Jonathan Williams provided an update on fundraising for the acquisition of the Lacock Cup and the Picasso linocuts.

      2.2.4 Item 7.1, Cyrus Cylinder loan: the Director reported that the loan of the Cyrus Cylinder to the CSMVS in Mumbai at the end of the year had been confirmed.

      2.2.5 Item 9.2, Acquisitions, De-accession and Human Remains policies: the policies had been published following the Board’s approval.

      2.2.6 Item 12.1, Spoliation claim: Jonathan Williams reported that a valuation for the drawing had been agreed with the claimant and that the Chairman had authorised an ex-gratia payment which had been made.

3. **Declaration of Interests**

   3.1 No interests were declared.

4. **Chairman’s report**

   4.1 The Chairman reported on his recent meeting with the Secretary of State, Maria Miller.

   4.2 Liz Forgan provided an update on the Chair selection process.
5. **Discussion**

5.1 The Trustees held an extensive discussion on the key questions that the Museum should be addressing to and through the collection over the next 10 years. The discussion was informed by papers written by seven Trustees on the subjects: the history of humanity; humanity and the environment; religion; identities; science, DNA and bio-archaeology; trade and economics; and international relations and world affairs.

5.2 Following the Director’s response to the discussion, it was agreed a paper would be submitted to the next Board meeting which would focus on the scope and priorities for action.

*Action: The Director*

**Part Two: Saturday 28 September 08.30-11.00**

6. **Building Development Framework**

6.1 The Director introduced a discussion on the Building Development Framework, and Marilyn Standley and Jonathan Williams gave a presentation on its objectives and their implications for the building over the long-term. It was explained that the Framework aimed to provide a strategy for dealing with a number of issues relating to the Bloomsbury site and that it would enable the development of a programme of works.

6.2 In response, Antony Gormley presented his views on the presentation of the collection, and Bonnie Greer presented her views on visitor engagement, in particular the role of social media.

6.3 Liz Forgan, as Chair of the Major Projects Committee, concluded the discussion by endorsing the Framework.

7. **Management update**

7.1 The Board noted the Management Report.

7.2 The Board noted the Advocacy Update.

7.3 The Board noted the Quarter 1 Operating Plan Report.

8. **WCEC update**

8.1 The Board noted the update on the cladding programme. Liz Forgan gave Trustees assurance that the Sainsbury Exhibitions Gallery would be ready for the opening of the Vikings exhibition in March.

9. **Committee minutes**

9.1 The Board noted the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting of 25 April and the Audit Committee meeting of 21 March.
10. **Any other business**

10.1 Joanna Mackle informed the Board that a briefing pack on the Museum’s achievements would be sent to them shortly.

*Action: Joanna Mackle*

**Date of next Board meeting:** 21 November 2013, 15.00-17.30

____________________________Chairman