

The British Museum Board of Trustees

Minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2011 at the British Museum

Present

Mr Niall FitzGerald KBE (Chairman)
Chief Emeka Anyaoku
Ms Karen Armstrong
Professor Sir Christopher Bayly
Lord Broers
Mr Francis Finlay
Dame Liz Forgan
Miss Val Gooding
Mr Antony Gormley
Ms Bonnie Greer
Ms Penny Hughes
Mr George Iacobescu
Dr Olga Kennard
Mrs Edmée Leventis
Mr John Micklethwait
Mr David Norgrove
Sir Martin Sorrell
Lord Stern
Baroness Wheatcroft

In Attendance

Neil MacGregor	Director
Andrew Burnett	Deputy Director
Chris Yates	Director of Administration
Justin Morris	Director of Operations and Projects (Item 6.4)
Joanna Mackle	Director of Public Engagement (Item 11)
Graham Stirk	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (Item 7)
John McElgunn	Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners (Item 7)
Mark Bates	Governance and Planning Manager (Secretary)
Kate Harris	Executive Assistant to the Director (Observer)

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Sir Martin Sorrell to the Board.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from Sir Ronald Cohen, Professor Gamble, Baroness Kennedy and Professor Sen.

2. Minutes of Meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 29 September and 1 October 2011 were approved and the Chairman was authorised to sign them as a true record.

- 2.2 Matters arising:
 - 2.2.1 Item 2.2.1, Torres Strait claim for return of human remains: Andrew Burnett reported that the first independent report had been received and that representatives from the Torres Strait Islands had met with Karen Armstrong and Museum staff that morning to discuss the claim and the establishment of long-term relationships.
 - 2.2.2 Item 2.2.2, Spoliation claim; the Director advised the Board that the Spoliation Advisory Panel's decision on a claim for clocks and watches in the Museum's collection was imminent.

3. Declaration of Interests

- 3.1 No interests were declared.

4. Chairman's report

- 4.1 The Chairman informed the Board that the Nominations and Governance Committee would be reconstituted to include the three Deputy Chairs.
- 4.2 Penny Hughes had accepted the Chairman's invitation to join the Standing Committee from January 2012.
- 4.3 Liz Forgan would become a Deputy Chair from January 2012, following the retirement of Val Gooding.
- 4.4 The Chairman reported on the International Strategy Committee meeting held that morning.
- 4.5 The Chairman thanked Francis Finlay for organising events around the successful launch in New York of the American edition of the *A History of the World* book.

5. Management Report

- 5.1 The Trustees noted the Management Report.
- 5.2 The Director reported that:
 - 5.2.1 Discussions with Turkey about their claim for the restitution of the Samsat Stele were ongoing.
 - 5.2.2 The Museum would aim to remain open to the public if the planned strike on the Government's pension reforms went ahead on 30 November.
- 5.3 Chris Yates provided a progress report on the Financial Sustainability Programme.
- 5.4 Justin Morris provided a progress report on security. He confirmed that a contingency plan for dealing with acts of civil disorder was in development.

6. Committee reports

- 6.1 The Chairs of the Standing Committee, Nominations and Governance Committee and the Audit Committee reported on recent committee business (see Annex to minutes).

7. World Conservation and Exhibitions Centre

- 7.1 John McElgunn gave a presentation on progress with various aspects of the WCEC design.

8. Loans

- 8.1 The Board approved the loan objects for the Wonders of Mesopotamia exhibition to the Victoria Museum, Melbourne, Australia.

9. Research Report

- 9.1 The Board noted the report for future discussion.

10. Committee minutes

- 10.1 The Board noted the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting of 8 September (tabled), the Audit Committee meeting of 30 June and the WCEC Committee meeting of 26 September.

11. Advocacy Report

- 11.1 Joanna Mackle presented the highlights of the Advocacy Report.

12. Any other business

- 12.1 The Chairman thanked Edmée Leventis and Val Gooding for their extraordinary contributions to the Board; the Trustees looked forward to thanking them at a dinner next year.

Date of next meeting: 22 March 2012

_____Chairman

Item 6: Committee Reports

Standing Committee meeting 27 October 2011

- The hospitality tender scope and process was approved. The Standing Committee would approve the final recommendation in the New Year.
- The Committee had received a progress report on security.
- The Keeper of Greece and Rome briefed the Committee on discussions with Turkey about their claim for the Samsat stele, and on relations with Greece and Libya.
- A commercial loan to the Queensland Museum, Brisbane was approved.

Nominations and Governance Committee meeting 24 November 2011

- A progress report on the current recruitment exercise was received.
- The Royal Society's nomination of a Trustee to replace Olga Kennard was discussed.
- It was confirmed that the process for considering the reappointment of Trustees for a second term would include a meeting with the Chairman.
- The annual Board Performance review questionnaire was approved.

Audit Committee meeting 27 October 2011

- The threat of terrorism was considered.
- WCEC funding and the Museum's reputation were considered.
- The findings of an internal audit report on Integrated Pest Management were discussed.