
Minutes

The British Museum Board of Trustees Meeting 2 & 3 October 2015

Park Hotel, Amsterdam

Present

Sir Richard Lambert
Chairman
Ms Karen Armstrong (3 October only)
The Hon Nigel Boardman
Ms Cheryl Carolus
Dame Liz Forgan
Professor Clive Gamble
Ms Wasfi Kani
Professor Nicola Lacey
Lord Lupton
Sir Deryck Maughan
Mr John Micklethwait (3 October only)
Sir Paul Nurse
Mr Gavin Patterson (2 October only)
Mr Grayson Perry
Lord Sassoon
Ms Ahdaf Soueif
Lord Stern
Lord Turner
Baroness Wheatcroft

In Attendance

Neil MacGregor
Director
Joanna Mackle
Deputy Director
Jonathan Williams
Deputy Director
Christopher Yates
Deputy Director
Marilyn Standley
Deputy Director
Mark Bates
Governance & Planning Manager
Emma Hayes
Collections Programme Manager
(Item 7)
Jeremy Hill
Research Manager (Item 7)
Sally Fletcher
Curator (Item 7)

Part One: Friday 2 October, 16.45-18.15

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Nicola Lacey to the Board.
- 1.2 The Chairman congratulated James Lupton on his elevation to the House of Lords.
- 1.3 Apologies had been received from Patricia Cumper and Amartya Sen. John Micklethwait and Karen Armstrong had given apologies for the Friday meeting, and Gavin Paterson had given apologies for the Saturday meeting.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1 No interests were declared.

3. Spending Review

- 3.1 There was a discussion about the forthcoming Spending Review.

4. Minutes of Meeting

- 4.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 2 July 2015 were approved as a true record.
- 4.2 Matters arising:
 - 4.2.1 Item 5.2, Manchester Museum: the Director provided an update on discussions with Manchester Museum and the Government on the proposed South Asia partnership gallery.
 - 4.2.2 Item 5.3, Cultural heritage protection training: the Director provided an update on discussions with Government on the establishment of a training programme for Iraq to be led by the Museum.
 - 4.2.3 Item 10, Board business review: the Chairman confirmed that the new structure for Board agendas had been implemented from this meeting.

5. Chairman's report

- 5.1 The Chairman provided an update on the Trustee recruitment exercise.
- 5.2 The Chairman was pleased to report for the record that the appointment of the new Director, Hartwig Fischer, had been approved by the Prime Minister and that the official announcement had been made on 29 September. He wished to record his gratitude to the Search Committee and the DCMS Permanent Secretary, Sue Owen, for their support. Liz Forgan thanked the Chairman on behalf of the Trustees for his outstanding leadership of the recruitment process.

6. For Information

- 6.1 The Board noted the Management Report.
- 6.2 The Board noted the Quarter 1 Operating Plan Report. It was agreed that the quarterly Management Accounts would also be submitted to the Board for information, following discussion at the Standing Committee.

Action: Christopher Yates, Deputy Director

- 6.3 The Board noted the minutes of the Standing Committee meeting of 4 June, the Audit Committee meeting of 19 March and the Nominations and Governance Committee meeting of 4 June.

Part Two: Saturday 3 October, 09.00-10.45

7. Reading Room concept

- 7.1 Jonathan Williams led a presentation on the proposed curatorial concept for the Reading Room. He provided an overview of the collection display strategy presented to Trustees earlier in the year to help set the context. Members of the project team presented the history of the Reading Room and its use; the outcome of benchmarking visits to look at how similar spaces had been redeveloped; and a proposition for the curatorial concept for approval.
- 7.2 There was strong support for the concept and the Board gave its unanimous approval for the project to proceed to the next stage.

8. Other business

- 8.1 There being no other business, the Chairman closed the meeting.

Date of next Board meeting: 03 December 2015, 15.00-17.30

_____Chairman