

Minutes

The British Museum Board Meeting 19 March 2020

Held at the British Museum

Present in person

Sir Richard Lambert
Chairman
Ms Clarissa Farr
Sir Paul Nurse
Mr Grayson Perry

Present by phone

The Hon Nigel Boardman
Ms Cheryl Carolus
Dame Elizabeth Corley
Professor Chris Gosden
Ms Muriel Gray
Mr Philipp Hildebrand
Dame Vivian Hunt
Sir Deryck Maughan
Sir Charlie Mayfield
Mr Gavin Patterson
Mr Mark Pears
Sir Paul Ruddock
Lord Sassoon
Dame Minouche Shafik
Lord Turner
Mr George Weston
Professor Sarah Worthington

In Attendance

Hartwig Fischer
Director
Jonathan Williams
Deputy Director
Christopher Yates
Deputy Director
Jane Whittaker (Items 3-6)
Director of Resources
Kary Kelly (Item 8)
Director of Development
Mark Bates
Governance & Planning Manager

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Sarah Worthington to the Board.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from Patricia Cumper.

2. Declaration of Interests

- 2.1 No interests were declared.

For discussion

3. COVID-19

- 3.1 Christopher Yates gave a presentation on the Museum's contingency plans for managing the developing COVID-19 crisis. He explained that the Museum's policy was to follow and respond to government advice, and that full closure of the Museum was being planned for.
- 3.2 The Board commended the Executive on the planning, and supported the approach adopted, recognising the difficulties presented by an unprecedented and rapidly changing situation.

For approval

4. Budget and Operating Plan 2020/21

- 4.1 The Board approved the Budget and Operating Plan for 2020/21, noting the contingency arrangements in place for the impact of the COVID-19 crisis.

5. BM Reserves policy, grants and designations

- 5.1 The Board approved the reserves policy, grants and designations, including the delegation of grant decisions to any member of the Directorate Group.

Item 6 constituted a meeting of the Board of the British Museum Friends

6. British Museum Friends (BMF)

- 6.1 The BMF Board approved the Budget for 2020/21.
- 6.2 The BMF Board approved the reserves policy, grants and designations.

7. Public Engagement Strategy

- 7.1 This item was deferred.

8. Acceptance of Donations

- 8.1 The Board approved changes to the Acceptance of Donations and Sponsorship policy and procedures.
- 8.2 The Board noted a report of donations and sponsorship of £25,000 or more.

9. Trustee appointment

- 9.1 The Board approved the appointment of Professor Dame Mary Beard as a Trustee for a first term of four years from 19 March 2020.

10. Loan

- 10.1 The Board approved the loan of items to the Victoria and Albert Museum for an exhibition on ancient Iran.

Standing Business

11. Minutes

- 11.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 5 December 2019 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

- 11.2 Matters arising:

- 11.2.1 Item 8.1 Chairman's report, committee appointments: the Chairman reported that Chris Gosden would become Chair of the Research Committee when Paul Nurse stood down in September, and that he had been appointed to the Standing Committee. Muriel Gray had been appointed to the Standing Committee. Steve McGuckin of Turner and Townsend had been co-opted to the Rosetta Project Committee.

- 11.2.2 Item 9.3, restitution request: the Director gave an update on discussions in relation to a restitution request.

12. Chairman's Report

- 12.1 The Chairman noted with regret that this was the last Board meeting for Adair Turner and Gavin Patterson who would be standing down in June. He thanked them for their outstanding contributions to the Board and committees over the last eight years.

13. Committee reports

- 13.1 This item was deferred.

For information

The following items were noted by the Board without discussion.

14. Management Report

15. Committee minutes

16. Archaeology approvals

17. Loan approvals

_____Chairman

Date of next meeting: 2 July 2020, 15.00-17.30