

Minutes

The British Museum Board Meeting 2 October 2021

Held at Sprowston Manor Hotel, Norwich

Present

Sir Richard Lambert
Chairman
Professor Dame Mary Beard
Dame Elizabeth Corley
Ms Clarissa Farr
Professor Chris Gosden
Ms Muriel Gray
Mr Philipp Hildebrand
Dame Vivian Hunt
Sir Charlie Mayfield
Mr George Osborne
Mr Mark Pears
Mr Grayson Perry
Sir Paul Ruddock
Baroness Shafik
Professor Sir Mark Walport
Mr George Weston
Professor Dame Sarah Worthington

In Attendance

Hartwig Fischer
Director
Jonathan Williams
Deputy Director
Christopher Yates
Deputy Director
Jane Whittaker
Director of Resources
Kary Kelly (to Item 4)
Director of Development
Mark Bates
Governance & Planning Manager
Sir Deryck Maughan
Guest
Lord Sassoon
Guest

1. Welcome and apologies

1.1 The Chairman welcomed George Osborne to the Board.

1.2 There were no apologies.

2. Declaration of Interests

2.1 No interests were declared.

Discussion

3. Reimagining the British Museum

3.1 The Board discussed the Director's paper.

4. Rosetta Project – Case for Support

4.1 Kary Kelly introduced the draft Case for Support, and the Trustees provided their views. A further iteration would be submitted to the Board for consideration.

Action: Kary Kelly, Director of Development

Standing Business

5. Minutes

5.1 The minutes of the Board meetings held on 1 July 2021 were approved as a true record of the meeting.

5.2 Matters arising:

5.2.1 Item 4.3, BM Annual Report and Accounts: these were approved by ministers and laid in parliament on 20 July.

5.2.2 Item 11.3, Trustee appointments: the Chairman reported that a decision on three Prime Ministerial appointments was still awaited.

6. Chairman's Report

6.1 The Chairman was pleased to inform the Board that Professor Abhijit Banerjee had been appointed as a Trustee by Her Majesty The Queen.

7. Management Report

7.1 The Board noted the report.

7.2 The Director provided updates on the Benin City archaeology project and an upcoming Benin Dialogue Group meeting; the *Reimagining the British Museum* project; and a project to digitise Hans Sloane's collections and writings. He was also pleased to confirm the appointment of the new Director of Communications.

7.3 Christopher Yates gave a progress report on the BM_ARC and the Spending Review.

7.4 Jonathan Williams provided an update on exhibitions.

8. Committee reports

8.1 Vivian Hunt informed the Board that the next Audit Committee meeting would focus on information management, and that any ongoing COVID risks would be managed as part of the main corporate risk register.

8.2 Minouche Shafik reported that the Nominations and Remuneration Committee had discussed a new Board skills matrix at its last meeting. All Trustees and co-opted committee members would be invited to participate in a skills audit.

Information

9. Committee minutes

9.1 The Board noted the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting of 18 March 2021; the Standing Committee meeting of 10 June 2021; and the Nominations and Remuneration Committee meeting of 17 June 2021.

10. Archaeology approvals

10.1 The Board noted the report of Standing Committee approvals.

11. Annual Loans Strategy Report

11.1 The Board noted the report.

Discussion

12. COVID lessons learned

12.1 Jane Whittaker gave an overview of a paper on lessons learned from the Museum's management of the impact of COVID.

13. Any other business

13.1 On behalf of the Board, Muriel Gray thanked Richard Lambert for his service to the Museum as Chairman.

_____Chair

Date of next meeting: 2 December 2021, the British Museum