

# Minutes The British Museum Board Meeting 7 July 2022

## Held at the British Museum

### Present

Mr George Osborne (Items 1-19)  
Chair  
Professor Abhijit Banerjee (online)  
Professor Dame Mary Beard  
Dame Elizabeth Corley  
Ms Clarissa Farr  
Professor Chris Gosden  
Ms Muriel Gray  
Mr Grayson Perry  
Mr Philipp Hildebrand  
Lord Marland (Items 1-4 and 10)  
Sir Charlie Mayfield  
Mr Mark Pears  
Sir Paul Ruddock  
Baroness Shafik  
Ms Priyanka Wadhawan  
Professor Sir Mark Walport  
Mr George Weston (Items 1-4 and 10)  
Professor Dame Sarah Worthington

### In Attendance

Hartwig Fischer (Items 1-17)  
Director  
Jonathan Williams (Items 1-17)  
Deputy Director  
Christopher Yates (Items 1-17)  
Deputy Director  
Elizabeth Knight (Items 1-17)  
Governance Manager  
Jane Whittaker (Items 3-6)  
Director of Resources  
John Dickinson-Lilley (online) (Item 4)  
Head of Communications  
Jill Maggs (Item 3)  
Director of Public Engagement  
Jane Portal (item 8)  
Keeper of Asia  
Russell Torrance (Item 3)  
Director Estates & Capital Projects

**1. Apologies**

1.1 Apologies had been received from Dame Vivian Hunt.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

2.1 No interests were declared.

***Discussion and Approval***

**3. Rosetta Project**

3.1 The Director presented an updated articulation of the British Museum's purpose and principles, along with the key deliverables and critical enablers of the Rosetta Project. Following a detailed discussion, the Board approved the British Museum's purpose and principles and the aims of the Rosetta Project.

3.2 There was a full discussion of the curatorial principles set out in the draft framework for the development of the permanent galleries. The Board supported the principles and noted that the framework would be refined over the summer to take account of an initial public engagement exercise. It was noted that the updated framework would be incorporated in the masterplan document presented in October.

3.3 The Board discussed the proposed approach to developing digital technology for audiences. The Board agreed the general approach to developing digital projects.

3.4 The Board noted an update on progress towards delivering the masterplan for Board approval at the October Board meeting.

**4. Collections discussion**

4.1 John Dickinson-Lilley summarised a proposed new approach to communications. Following a discussion, the Board approved the new approach and the next steps proposed by the Chair.

**5. BM Annual Report & Accounts 2021/22**

5.1 The Board noted the Audit Committee annual report to the Board.

5.2 The Board noted the Auditor's Report, and on the recommendation of the Audit Committee, approved the letter of representation for signature by the Director.

***Action: The Director***

5.3 On the recommendation of the Audit Committee, the Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2021/22 for signature by the Chair and the Director on receipt of ministerial approval.

***Action: The Chair and the Director***

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

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**6. British Museum Friends (BMF) Annual Report & Accounts 2021/22**

- 6.1 The BMF Board noted the Auditor's Report.
- 6.2 The BMF Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2021/22 on the recommendation of the BMF Audit Committee.
- 6.3 The BMF Board approved the letter of representation on the recommendation of the BMF Audit Committee.

**7. Fundraising**

- 7.1 The Board noted the Annual Donations Report 2021/22.
- 7.2 The Board reconfirmed the Acceptance of Donations and Sponsorship Policy & Procedures.

**8. Sir Joseph Hotung Bequest – acquisition approval**

- 8.1 Jane Portal gave an overview of The Sir Joseph Hotung collection, which had been bequeathed to the British Museum in Sir Joseph's will.
- 8.2 It was noted that the extraordinarily generous and significant bequest comprised 246 jades, 15 blue and white porcelains, 24 bronzes and other items of metalwork, a Neolithic white pottery jar, and a dry lacquer head of a bodhisattva. The Board approved the acquisition for the collection of the British Museum and expressed its appreciation of the generosity of the late Sir Joseph Hotung and gratitude to his family.

**9. Security Policy**

- 9.1 The Trustees approved the updated Security Policy, which had been reviewed by the Audit Committee as part of the wider Security Strategy.

**10. Trustee appointments**

- 10.1 The Chair outlined the skills and experience that Alejandro Santo Domingo and Weijian Shan would each bring to the Board. The Board approved the appointment of Alejandro Santo Domingo and Weijian Shan as Trustees for a first term of four years from 7 July 2022.
- 10.2 The Board approved the appointment of Sarah Worthington as the British Museum appointed trustee of the George Bernard Shaw Trust.

***Standing Business***

**11. Minutes**

- 11.1 The minutes of the Board meetings held on 24 March 2022 were approved as a true record of the meeting. There were no matters arising.

**12. Chair's Report**

- 12.1 The Chair congratulated Chris Gosden on his reappointment by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, as the Society of Antiquaries Trustee for the British Museum for a second term from August.
- 12.2 The Chair informed the Board that he had appointed Priyanka Wadhawan to the Rosetta Project Committee.

**13. Management Report**

- 13.1 The Board noted the report.

**14. Committee reports**

- 14.1 This item was deferred.

***Information***

**15. Committee minutes**

- 12.1 The Board noted the minutes of the Nominations and Remuneration Committee meeting of 20 January 2022; the Standing Committee meeting of 17 February 2022; and the Nominations and Remuneration Committee meeting of 24 March 2022.

**16. Loan approvals**

- 16.1 The Board noted the loans approved by the Standing Committee and the Chair.

**17. Any other business**

- 17.1 There was no other business before the closed session.

*The Director, Deputy Directors and Governance Manager left the meeting.*

***Closed session***

**18. Board performance review**

- 18.1 Minouche Shafik outlined the review's findings and the Nominations and Remuneration Committee's proposed response.

**19. Director's remuneration**

- 19.1 After careful discussion, the Board approved the Nominations and Remuneration Committee's recommendations for the Director's remuneration for 2021/22, in respect of both basic salary and bonus. The Board also confirmed the Director's objectives for 2022/23 which had been agreed by the Nominations and Remuneration Committee.

*The Chair left the meeting and Minouche Shafik assumed the Chair.*

**20. Chair's performance**

- 20.1 Minouche Shafik reported on her review of the Chair's performance, as discussed previously by the Nominations and Remuneration Committee.

\_\_\_\_\_Chair

**Date of next meeting:** 7 – 9 October 2022, Paris