

**Science Museum Group Board of Trustees Meeting
Held Virtually via Microsoft Teams
Wednesday 2 December 2020, 2.00-5:00PM**

Present:

Mary Archer (Chair)
Judith Donovan
Sarah Dry
Sharon Flood
Jo Foster
Russell Foster
Hannah Fry
Peter Hendy
Ludmilla Jordanova
Ajit Lalvani
Iain McIntosh
David Phoenix
Sarah Staniforth
Steven Underwood
Anton Valk
Fiona Woolf

In attendance:

Ian Blatchford, SMG Director
Jonathan Newby, SMG Managing Director
Shri Mukundagiri, Director of Corporate Services
Roger Highfield, SMG Science Director
Deborah Myers, SMG Director of Development
Karen Livingstone, SMG Director of Masterplan and Estates
Julia Knights, Deputy Director, Science Museum
Peter Dickinson, SMG Director of Communications
Sally MacDonald, Director, Science and Industry Museum (SIM)
Jo Quinton-Tulloch, Director, National Science & Media Museum (NSMM)
Judith McNicol, Director, National Railway Museum (NRM)
Lacie Southon, SMG Board Secretary

Sian Williams, Programme Director: One Collection (*for item 6*)
Helen Jones, Director of Global Engagement & Strategy (*for item 12*)
Brian Cantor (*observer*)
Lopa Patel (*observer*)
Kara Beeson, SMG Directorate Support Officer (*observer*)

1 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for absence.

The SMG Chair noted that Helen Jones, Director of Global Engagement & Strategy, would join Board meetings between now and October 2021 as an observer and to update on the Inspiring Futures Review.

It was noted that, due to delays to confirmation of their Trustee reappointment, Brian Cantor and Lopa Patel joined the meeting as observers.

2 Declarations of Interest

It was reported that Sharon Flood had joined the Board of CityFibre.

3 Minutes of SMG Board Meeting & Strategy Day on 13 & 14 October 2020 and matters arising
The Board approved the previous minutes of the SMG Board Meeting and Strategy Day.

4 Chair's Report

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. It was reported that Trustee succession planning was ongoing.

The Board were informed that the SMG Chair continues to liaise with the Leader of Darlington Borough Council regarding Locomotion No. 1 being returned to SMG.

The Chair noted the death of British Chemist Sir John Meurig Thomas. Sir John took part in an 'In Conversation' event with herself and Roger Highfield, SMG Science Director, in October 2020, discussing Heroes of Structural Biology, and sadly died on 13 November 2020.

4.1 **Recommendations from Fellowship Nominations Committee**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. **The Board approved** the recommendations.

5 **Director's Report**

The SMG Director reported that it was Karen Livingstone's last meeting before she joins the Fitzwilliam Museum in February 2021. Karen was thanked for her hard work and contributions during her 12 years at SMG.

It was reported that COP26 progress remains a focus area for SMG. The Board discussed the importance of strategic gallery updates to reflect topics such as climate change and sustainability.

It was reported that support (in kind and cash) from Google to allow a first batch of digitisation for the *Daily Herald Archive* in Bradford had been confirmed. The SMG Director thanked Charlie Hill, Head of Corporate Relationships, for her work in bringing Google on board.

The SMG Director thanked Jack Kirby, Head of Collections Services, for progressing discussions with the Type Archive Museum.

A discussion was had regarding the Comprehensive Spending Review. It was reported that DCMS had hoped the grant would rise with inflation but that did not transpire. It was announced that capital funding 2021/22 for National Museums would be £60m, and it is not yet known how this would be allocated. It was stated that negotiations with Government for a Covid-19 funding package for next year are ongoing.

It was noted that the National Science and Media Museum had received a grant from the British Council for creating a new partnership with the Museum of Soviet Video Games.

The Board was informed that the Learning change programme was in its final stages, with colleagues being redeployed within the new structure.

It was noted that the transfer of the Dounreay Nuclear Power Station Control Panels from the National Collections Centre to National Museum of Scotland was under discussion and it was expected that this proposed move would be presented to the Collection and Research Committee in January 2021.

6 **SMG Wroughton / Building ONE Update**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. It was reported that consultants, Steer Group, had created a framework for development and the statement of strategic intent. It was stated that SMG would aim to pursue passive opportunities, reactive opportunities, and mission-led strategic partnerships. It was explained that, going forward, a dedicated Wroughton 'management group' would be established to give direction and support to commercial developments and to guide appropriate proposals. It was noted that it would be important to focus on strategic partnerships to generate income, but also to defray the maintenance and repair costs of the hangars.

It was reported that, when the National Collections Centre (NCC) opens to visitors, 15,000 physical visitors were expected per year, including researchers, school groups and guided public tours. If this figure were to be achieved, the NCC would be the most visited collections storage in Europe. It was stated that planning is underway to engage digital audiences with the National Collections Centre. The Board agreed that digital engagement would be vital for the site.

The Board received a presentation from the One Collection Programme Director. It was reported that Building ONE would be handed over from Kier to SMG today. It was noted that the scope of the One Collection programme includes provisions to improve the visitor and employee welcome at NCC. It was explained that the improvements would include a visitor hub with learning space, cloakroom, and welfare provision as well as improved wayfinding and transport on site. The Board thanked the One Collection Programme Director and team for their hard work and contributions in getting the project to this point.

It was noted that the NCC website was updated regularly and more information on Building ONE would be shared very soon. It was suggested that SMG consider the NCC having its own URL.

A discussion was had regarding the extension of Building ONE. It was stated that no leases had been confirmed and SMG was exploring how else to use the space: a proposal would be presented to the SMG Finance Committee soon.

The Board approved the direction of travel for SMG Wroughton strategic developments and the progress with Building ONE.

Peter Hendy left the meeting.

7 **Masterplan & Estate Committee Update**

It was reported that the Masterplan & Estate Committee (MEC) held an initial discussion at about decarbonisation and what that means for SMG's boilers and reliance on natural gas. It was agreed that SMG needs to think long-term and be entrepreneurial but realistic in terms of capital cost and the energy market.

It was reported that short-term efficiencies, including decreasing existing energy use and looking at replacing old gas boilers with new gas boilers as an interim measure, would be explored.

The Board was provided with an update on the various works taking place at Science & Industry Museum (SIM). This included the Power Hall fabric and roof repairs, the Special Exhibition Gallery build, the 1830 Warehouse repairs and the Station Hall roof repairs.

It was noted that an additional MEC meeting had been scheduled in January 2021 to review the forward plan before the Director of Masterplan & Estate leaves SMG at the end of January. The MEC Chair thanked Karen Livingstone, Director of Masterplan & Estate, for her significant contributions during her time with SMG.

7.1 **Term Maintenance Contract**

The Board was asked to approve the recommendation as endorsed by Finance Committee and Masterplan & Estate Committee to award the Term Maintenance Contract to CBRE Managed Services Ltd. The awarded contract will run for a minimum term of 5 years and maximum of 7 years. It was explained that, if the Board approve, the next steps would be a 10-day OJEU standstill period, mobilisation in January 2021 and the contract would start on 1 April 2021. **The Board approved** the Term Maintenance Contract.

Sian Williams left the meeting.

8 **Finance Committee Update**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The Board noted SMG's achievements in building a collaborative approach to budgeting and work toward reducing the deficit through various initiatives.

The Board discussed the Blythe House project and costs related to the project overrunning. It was noted that SMG is still in discussion with DCMS regarding possible additional funding.

The Board noted the quarter 2 update of the SMG Plan 2020/21.

9 **Audit & Risk Committee Update**

It was reported that both the Science Museum Group (SMG) and Science Museum Enterprises Annual Report & Accounts (ARA) had been laid in Parliament and were available to view on the SMG website. It was explained that work is underway to assess and plan the indicative timetable for the 2020-21 ARA. It was noted that, again, the timing is likely to depend on confirmation of the position of the Greater Manchester Pension Fund, meaning the ARA could be finalised post-recess in 2021.

The Board noted the SMG Risk Management Report. It was stated that the main change was that the Covid-19 outbreak risk had increased following the second lockdown. It was added that the risk management process was being continuously monitored. It was reported that the Audit and Risk Committee reviewed a detailed set of operational metrics which monitors the effectiveness of the risk management control environment.

It was suggested that the Covid-19 outbreak risk could be reframed to capture more broadly the risk of any potential outbreak or pandemic in future. It was stated that the Covid-19 risk was included as a specific topical risk and more broader risks were captured lower down the register, but that the Director of Corporate Services

would consider how best to capture the broader potential risk within the risk register.

The Board discussed the stopping-up order risk in York. It was explained that the NRM Director and team are closely monitoring the risk.

9.1 **SMG Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report**

It was reported that the Health & Safety team are in the process of rolling out new key performance indicators. However, they are working through anomalies caused by fewer visitors causing skewed results.

It was reported that the focus continues to be on ensuring all sites are Covid-secure and concentrating on colleague wellbeing.

The SIM internal audit fire safety report was discussed. It was agreed that focusing on fire safety during construction was especially important.

Jo Foster left the meeting.

10 **Collections & Research Committee Update**

It was reported that there was a useful discussion regarding inclusive displays and interpretation which showed pragmatism and an understanding that changing the displays is work-in-progress.

10.1 **Collections Development Policy**

The Board was asked to approve the Collections Development Policy which had been previously approved by the Collections & Research Committee (CoRe). It was explained that the policy outlines both group wide and site-specific collection objectives with some standardised elements required for the Museum Accreditation scheme. It was added that acquisition authority levels had been revised in line with SMG Financial Protocols and principles of good governance. It was noted that in January 2021, CoRe would review archives in more detail. It was explained that the value under delegation of acquisition and for transfer differed in line with the Museum Accreditation scheme.

The Board discussed the policy, and it was requested that some revisions were made including reviewing inconsistent descriptions and explicitly defining contentious collections. The SMG Chair requested that further questions or comments on the policy be sent to the SIM Director after the meeting. **(Action: ALL)**

It was agreed that all comments would be considered, and a revised policy would be presented for Board approval. **(Action: SMA)**

11 **Collections and Authority Limits**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The revised Terms of Reference were discussed, and it was agreed that the Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board authority limits would be reviewed annually, while the Collections & Research Committee Terms of Reference would continue to be reviewed biennially. **The Board approved** the recommendations and the changes to the Terms of Reference were approved accordingly.

12 **Inspiring Futures Review Update**

The Chair of the Inspiring Futures Steering Group thanked trustees for participating in the workshops. It was explained that a findings report would be shared in mid-December.

The roadmap was noted, and it was explained that more time would be allocated to the Board meeting in March 2021 to allow time for further discussion.

13 **Board of Survey Recommendations**

It was noted that this would be last time recommendations would be presented to the Board for approval and that they would be presented to the Collections & Research Committee going forward. **The Board approved** the recommendations.

14 **Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board Recommendations**

It was reported that class 442401 had been withdrawn from de-designation since the Board papers were issued. It was explained that SMG had potentially found a worthy new home, and this would be explored further to avoid the de-designated object being scrapped. **The Board approved** the rest of the recommendations.

15 **Any other business**

It was reported that American artist Jenny Holzer had been commissioned to mark one year since the opening of *Medicine: The Wellcome Galleries*. The artwork would be installed in the *Faith, Hope and Fear Gallery, For Science* and would be announced later this week.

There was no further business.

Signed by Chair:

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Archer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial 'M'.

Date: 03/03/2021