

Minutes of SMG Board of Trustees Meeting
Held in the Smith Centre, Science Museum on
Wednesday 6 December 2023

<p><u>Present:</u></p> <p>SMG Trustees Dame Mary Archer (Chair) James Bilefield Professor Brian Cantor – <i>MS Teams</i> Tim Dugher Judith Donovan Professor Anya Hurlbert Iain McIntosh Lopa Patel Professor Greg Radick Lord Hendy Professor Washington Ochieng Professor Ajit Lalvani Baroness Nicky Morgan</p>	<p><u>In attendance:</u></p> <p>SMG Executive Sir Ian Blatchford, Director & Chief Executive Shri Mukundagiri, Chief Operating Officer Nicolas Raynaud, Director of Finance and Corporate Services Peter Dickinson, Director of Communications Deborah Myers, Director of Development Anna Dejean, Masterplan Director Dr Roger Highfield, Science Director Dr Julia Knights, Deputy Director, Science Museum (ScM) Sally MacDonald, Director, Science & Industry Museum (SIM) Judith McNicol, Director, National Railway Museum (NRM) Jo Quinton-Tulloch, Director of National Science and Media Museum (NSMM) Sarita Godber, Director of People and Culture Susan Raikes, Director of Learning – <i>item 6</i> David Jones, Deputy Finance Director – <i>items 9 - 10</i></p> <p>Jade Kirton-Vaughan, Head of Directorate (<i>Minutes</i>) – <i>MS Teams</i></p> <p>Sir Tim Laurence, SMG Chair-Elect (<i>Observer</i>) David Meek, Trustee, Science Museum Foundation (<i>Observer</i>)</p>
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1. Apologies for absence

Apologies had been received from Steven Underwood, Stephen Belcher, Sarah Staniforth, Sarah Sands and David Jacob.z

2. Declarations of interest

None.

3. Draft Minutes of SMG Board Meeting on 10th October 2023 and SMG Strategy Day Meeting on 11th October 2023

The minutes of the meetings were approved and would be signed by the Chair. (**Action: MA / JKV**)

4. SMG Chair's Report

The paper circulated previously was noted. In addition:

- The exit from Blythe House was complete and congratulations were offered to all involved.
- There were positive stories from around SMG including the success of Power Up at SCM and Wonderlab at NRM, full funding being received for City of Wonder at NSMM, 1,000 trees being planted at S+IP and 2m visitors to Injecting Hope around world.

4.1 SMG Strategy Day Outcomes

The paper circulated previously was noted. Actions from the sessions would be built into plans and the trustee leads would be kept informed of outcomes.

4.2 SMG Partnership Panel Report

The paper circulated previously was noted. **The Board approved** the Partnership Panel's recommendations outlined in the paper, including allowing an extension of one year to the newly added companies to the TPI Management Index Score, to improve their rating to a Level 4. In addition, Trustees asserted their support of the Chief Executive in the light of a highly inaccurate news article.

4.3 Framework Document

A verbal update was provided on the Framework Document which sets out the relationship between DCMS and SMG. Minor wording updates were being made to the final version which would then be sent to the Chair and Director for sign off, which had been delegated to them previously by the Board in March 2023.

5. Director's Report

The paper circulated previously was noted. In addition:

- Work was taking place to arrange a short series of digital climate talks around the opening of the Energy Revolution Gallery at SCM in March. These would be on the subjects of: Climate Change and Food Security, India's Green Transition, and the UK's Power Grid Problem.
- The contract with the Saudi Ministry of Culture had not yet been signed. However, it was hoped this would be resolved in January.
- South Kensington tube station was in need of an upgrade. A full public inquiry had taken place. However, the outcome of this had been postponed to the new year.
- Capital funding for Vision 2025 continued to be an ongoing issue and lobbying of different areas of government continued.
- It was hoped that York Council would sign the permissions to overcome the infrastructure issues for York Central the following week. Works could not commence until Leeman Road was closed and so delays were expected.

6. Safeguarding

A presentation on mandatory Safeguarding training was given and the following points noted:

- Following a peer review of SMG's safeguarding documents, one action was to develop safeguarding training for trustees. The training would be sent out to trustees in due course for completion and a mechanism for recording completion rates would be designed. **(ACTION: SR / JKV)**
- Training for staff was in place and varied depending on the role. Detail on this was contained within the Safeguarding Procedures which were available in the Review Room.

7. Policies and Terms of Reference Approvals

The paper circulated previously was noted. In addition:

7.1 SMG Partnership Panel Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference had been updated to add the Director of Global Engagement as a member. **The Board approved** the Terms of Reference for the Partnership Panel.

7.2 SMG Audit & Risk Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference had been updated to reflect that Health & Safety considerations would come twice a year as opposed to four times a year to allow meaningful comments on trends to be reported. Reportable incidents would continue to be raised at each meeting and it was agreed that this should be added to the agenda as a standing item. **The Board approved** the Terms of Reference for the Audit & Risk Committee.

7.3 SMG Fellowship Nominations Committee Terms of Reference

The Terms of Reference were due their bi-annual review. The document would be amended to make clearer that a group award could now be made. The Terms of Reference would then be taken back to Board for ratification in March. **(ACTION: RH / JKV)**

8. SMG Performance and Data Report

The paper circulated previously was noted. In addition:

- There remained a degree of manual intervention in the data that is presented in this report and the aim was to automate as much as possible over the coming years, but this would take time and investment.
- Visitor numbers were performing well and were ahead of budget with an average of 8 out of 10 visitors compared to pre-pandemic across all five museums.
- There had been some good improvements on workforce diversity statistics including on ethnicity and disability.

9. SMG Fellowship Committee Recommendations

The paper circulated previously was noted. **The Board approved** the recommendations for the SMG Fellows for 2024.

10. SMG Finance Committee Report

The papers circulated previously were noted. In addition:

- A discussion on SMG's financial situation took place, particularly on the approaches being taken to reduce the 2024/25 deficit by implementing a reduction to the public programme and to staffing budgets.
- With regards to the public programme, a paper had been shared on the financial parameters for future exhibitions.
- With regards to staffing, a formal consultation would launch in January for the initial phase which would

look at diminished need. A second phase would look at wider organisational reform and would take place in the spring.

- Leadership would be speaking to DCMS and Treasury on additional support to address the structural deficit.

A paper on the Greater Manchester Pension Fund (GMPF) was noted. In addition:

- **The Board approved** the proposed pension changes in relation to the GMPF.
- If affordable, SMG would seek to re-invest some of the expected annual savings into improved benefits for all SMG staff.

11. SMG Audit and Risk Committee Report (ARC)

The papers circulated previously were noted. In addition:

- Work had commenced to run a tender exercise for the SCMG Enterprises external audit.
- Significant work had taken place on the review of the principal risk dashboards. The ownership of risk was being placed more firmly at departmental level.
- An investigation into a procurement issue was ongoing. The supplier was no longer engaged and two members of staff were under formal investigation. A wider investigation into procurement would take place in due course.

12. SMG Masterplan and Estate Committee Report

The papers circulated previously were noted. In addition:

- **The Board approved** the delegated approval to the MEC for the SIM East End project to re-roof, landscape and waterproof the Upper Yard and New Warehouse.
- **The Board approved** the lease agreement at SIM to lease Store 4 (an unused store) to Factory.

13. SMG Collections and Research Committee Report

The papers circulated previously were noted. In addition:

- CoRe would be receiving an action plan at its January meeting on Collection Security, and it was expected recommendations would cover documentation, an external collection and archive location audit and digitisation. CoRe would also be working on a Collections Storage Review. It was hoped some simple changes to the stores would help with security.
- **The Board approved** the request to extend the Human Remains Policy by one year due to needing to wait for the Wellcome Collection to be ready to review their own policy as many of the human remains SMG held were on loan from Wellcome.
- A short discussion on the Type Archive took place. The remaining elderly trustee was being held personally liable for the unincorporated charity's debts. SMG was looking to be flexible where it could.

14. Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board Report

The paper circulated previously was noted.

15. AOB

- An update on works at NSMM was given. There was a delay to the works due to challenges with the excavation for the lift shaft. There would be an impact on when the Museum could reopen.
- The Annual Reports of Advisory Boards were available in the Review Room.
- The Board thanked Dame Mary Archer, on her last SMG Board Meeting, for her enormous contribution to SMG.

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 6 March 2024, Science Museum

Signed:  (SMG Chair)

Date: 6 March 2024