

SCIENCE MUSEUM GROUP

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting on Tuesday 10 October, 14:00-16:30, Library Reading Room, Wroughton

Present:

Dame Mary Archer (Chairman)
Lord Faulkner of Worcester
Ms Sharon Flood
Mr Matt d'Ancona
Lord Grade of Yarmouth
Professor Brian Cantor
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Mr Simon Linnett
Ms Lopa Patel
Mr Anton Valk
Dame Fiona Woolf
Dr Sarah Dry
Professor Russell Foster

In Attendance:

Mr Ian Blatchford	Director, SMG
Mr Jonathan Newby	Deputy Director and COO, SMG
Ms Jane Ellis	Director of Corporate Services
Dr Roger Highfield	Director of External Affairs
Ms Penny Canepa-Anson	Acting Director of Development
Ms Karen Livingstone	Director of Masterplan and Estate
Ms Sally MacDonald	Director, MSI
Ms Jo Quinton-Tulloch	Director, NSMM
Ms Judith McNicol	Acting Director, NRM and Director of People and Culture, SMG
Mr John Stack	Digital Director
Ms Helen Jones	Director of Strategy and International Estates Director
Ms Linda Kilroy	Estates Director
Ms Sian Thompson	Board Secretary

ACTION

BT 10/17 1. **Introduction and Apologies for Absence**

- 1.1 Apologies were received from Mr Andreas Goss, Professor David Phoenix and Lord Willetts of Havant.

BT 10/17 2. **Declarations of interest**

- 2.1 No interests were declared in items on the agenda.

BT 10/17 3. **Minutes of the meeting on 28 June 2017 and matters arising**

The minutes were approved as an accurate record of the previous meeting and signed by the Chairman. The following points were noted:

- **Item 8b iii, Audit and Risk Committee (Estates Milestones):** A presentation on Estates strategy was on the current agenda and the Board would receive a regular report (via the minutes of ARC) from December 2017 onwards;
- **Item 13b, Locomotion Due Diligence:** The governance framework for the transfer to SMG had been approved by the Board of Trustees by email in September 2017 and the naming issue would be addressed as part of the agenda for the 2017 Board Strategy Day.

BT 10/17 4. **Chairman's Report**

- 4.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In addition:

- SMG had a large number of trustees whose first and second terms would end in 2019 and therefore a recruitment campaign was imminent. These vacancies would be filled by independent Ministerial appointments (regulated by the Commissioner for Public Appointments), and the process was therefore outside SMG's control;
- A shadow meeting of the Locomotion Advisory Board would take place in December 2017. This committee would be chaired by an SMG trustee and report into the NRM Advisory Board, with the terms of reference coming to a future Board meeting for approval.

JMcN/ST

BT 10/17 5. **Director's Report**

5a The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. In addition:

- SM was vigorously lobbying the local council to address security concerns on Exhibition Road, as part of a campaign between neighbouring organisations and coordinated by the Exhibition Road Cultural Group (ERCG);
- Susan Raikes (previously of the British Museum) had been appointed as SMG Director of Learning and would take up post in January 2018;
- The national tour of the Soyuz capsule had launched at NSMM in September 2017; the event had been a huge triumph and had attracted extensive national media coverage;
- Conversations continued with Bradford City Council regarding an ongoing strategic alliance with SMG and a meeting was currently being sought with senior Council representatives;
- Conversations through the NMDC were revealing museum storage to be a chronic issue across UK national museums. This provided some useful context to SMG's own challenges but also showed that SMG could easily take a position of sector leadership through its National Collections Centre project;
- Storage options were also being reviewed in relation to the Locomotion site.

5b. **Update on Science Museum Masterplan**

The paper was noted. In addition:

- The fundraising environment was proving to be difficult for various projects currently in the pipeline (e.g. Agriculture and London Science City), particularly in the corporate sector. Both projects had previously received support from the Board in terms of content development and continued to be developed within 'seed' budgets. Both project budgets would return to the Board for approval in due course.
- There was also a need to think ahead to Masterplan Phase II and conduct a rigorous prioritisation exercise in terms of gallery updates and redevelopments, as well as various beautification issues across the Museum. A new consultation process had been commissioned to look at the Masterplan from 2019 onwards.

BT 10/17 6. **Estates Update**

6.1 A presentation was received which gave an overview of progress to date as well as immediate and future priorities. The following points were noted:

- SMG had a complex and diverse estate which presented a wide range of issues and risks;
- The PwC audit in April 2017 had borne out the findings of the new Estate Director, and a further audit in August had shown that improvements were already taking effect;
- Priorities included introducing a CAPEX programme, ensuring compliance with statutory obligations, driving improvements in the performance of external contractors, and addressing capacity and capability within the internal team;
- The end goal would be to fulfil the 'One Estate' vision set out as part of SMG's strategic priorities (*'Inspiring Futures'*);
- Trustees were invited to attend site walkarounds with the Estate Director.

LK

BT10/17 7. **Audience Profiles and Segmentation**

7.1 A presentation was received which gave a high-level overview of differences and trends between 2015/16 and 2017/16, covering areas such as visitor numbers, experience, profiles and segmentation. It was noted that the Science Museum used a different segmentation model to the rest of the Group, which was a new format deployed with the opening of *Robots*, but that the other museums were looking to adopt a similar model in the coming year.

- BT 10/17 8. **SMG Management Accounts.**
 8.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. Analysis of the Q1 forecast showed an operating surplus (due to unbudgeted income reflected as 'Touring' in the accounts); but reduced visit numbers over the summer period had also impacted on income (down £1m against budget), which clearly demonstrated SMG's reliance on visitor number performance. It was also noted that visitor numbers had recovered and performance in August was much better than budgeted, so some of the forecast lost income would probably be balanced out in the Q2 forecast.
- BT 10/17 9. **Audit and Risk Committee**
 9.1 The committee had not met since the previous Board meeting and so the update was recorded as a nil report.
- BT 10/17 10. **Finance Committee**
 10.1 A verbal update was given following the meeting held in September 2017. A discussion had taken place regarding SMG's appetite for business risk in relation to its level of reserves. It was noted that the Board reviewed this issue annually as part of the budget planning cycle and further discussion would be had at Finance Committee before a recommendation was made for Board approval.
- BT 10/17 11. **Levels 4&5: Stage 4 Design**
 11.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The request for additional budget (associated with a planning delay) of £188k was **approved**. It was noted that various elements of the project were being value engineered to find potential savings.
- BT 10/17 12. **Masterplan and Estate Committee: Recommendations**
 12.1 **The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.**
 12.2 **The Board agreed** to underwrite the NRM Great Hall project by £2m (noting that this was a HLF requirement), subject to full fundraising and having received proceeds from the recent land sale at NRM.
 12.3 It was noted that the two main contracts for the Medicine Galleries project had been awarded and that MEC had provided useful advice regarding risk management.
 12.4 A discussion was had regarding sustainability within Masterplan and Estates projects. Issues of sustainable development were often inherent in all major projects as a matter of good practice, but further consideration would be given as to whether a sustainability overview for SMG projects should be routinely provided to MEC. **FW/KL**
- BT 10/17 13. **Minutes and reports of SMG Board sub-committees and working groups**
 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. A minor correction was noted in the ARC minutes (two members should be listed as trustees). **ST**
- BT 10/17 14. **Any other business**
 14.1 A discussion was had regarding how best to update the Board on SMG's international activity. It was suggested that this could perhaps be a theme or agenda item for the next Board Strategy Day. **DMA/HJ/ST**
 14.2 It was hoped that a digital system for Board papers would be in place in time for the next December or March meetings.
 14.3 The Board was informed that the Deputy Chairman wished to hold a short closed session immediately after the Board meeting.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 6 December 2017, Dana Studio, Science Museum