

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting on Wednesday 8 March 2017, 16:00-19:00, Dana Studio, Science Museum

Present:

Dame Mary Archer (Chairman)
Lord Faulkner of Worcester
Ms Sharon Flood
Mr Andreas Goss
Lord Grade of Yarmouth
Professor Ludmilla Jordanova
Mr Simon Linnett
Ms Lopa Patel
Professor David Phoenix
Mr Anton Valk
Dame Fiona Woolf
Dr Sarah Dry
Professor Russell Foster
Mr Matthew D'Ancona

In Attendance:

Mr Ian Blatchford Director, SMG
Mr Jonathan Newby Deputy Director and COO, SMG
Ms Jane Ellis Director of Corporate Services, SMG
Dr Roger Highfield Director of External Affairs, SMG
Mr Paul Kirkman Director, NRM
Ms Lydia Lee Director of Development, SMG
Ms Karen Livingstone Director of Masterplan and Estate, SMG
Ms Sally MacDonald Director, MSI
Ms Jo Quinton-Tulloch Director, NMeM (Items 1-10)
Ms Sian Thompson Secretary to the Board

Item 3:

Mr James Purnell BBC Director of Education (Item 3)

Items 10 & 11:

Mr Michael Terwey Head of Collections and Exhibitions, NMeM
Mr Andrew McLean Head Curator, NRM

ACTION

BT 03/17 1. **Introduction and Apologies for Absence**

1.1 Apologies were received from Lord Willetts of Havant and Professor Brian Cantor.

BT 03/17 2. **Declarations of interest**

2.1 Lord Faulkner declared his role as a member of the Executive Board for the Gaming Regulators European Forum (GREF), in relation to item 6 in the Director's Report.

BT 03/17 3. **Tomorrow's World: BBC & SMG Collaborative Project**

3.1 James Purnell was welcomed to the meeting and a presentation was received which gave an overview of the project to date. The following points were noted:

- This would be a landmark partnership between the BBC and SMG, the Wellcome Trust and the Royal Society;
- BBC was offering a digital hub, podcast channel, production expertise and a TV broadcast campaign for Tomorrow's World which partners would feed into;
- The project would also feature a social media campaign and shared branding between partners;
- SMG was considered to be a key partner and the launch event would take place in May 2017 at the Science Museum.

J Purnell left the meeting

BT 03/17 4. **Minutes of meeting on 7 December 2016 and matters arising**

4.1 The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman. The following points were noted:

- **Item 3a:** MSI was close to finalising the Heads of Terms agreement relating to its site permeability and public realm and this would be reviewed by MEC in due course;
- **Item 9.3:** The due diligence work for Locomotion would be monitored by the SMG Finance Committee and a risk profile update was due at the next Board meeting;
- **Item 9.4:** It had been suggested that a presentation on the strategic vision for

SM / JN

JE / PK

Locomotion should be an agenda item for the Board Strategy Day in October 2017.

PK

BT 03/17 5. **Chairman's Business**

5a **Chairman's Report**

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

- Updated guidance on the new public appointments process had recently been received from DCMS; SMG would respond via letter and the matter would be raised with the National Museum Director's Council;
- There had been a reorganisation of Trustee responsibilities including subcommittee membership. A paper was tabled illustrating these changes;
- It was suggested that curator talks should become a routine item on the Board agenda. A member of the Medicine Galleries team would deliver the first in the series at the next Board meeting, and arrangements would be made accordingly.

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5b **Science Museum Fellows: 2017 Nominations**

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

- It was noted that the Board had approved the Fellowship for Tim Peake by correspondence between meetings, and the presentation had been made at the launch of the Soyuz display at the Science Museum in January 2017;
- It was suggested that it would be helpful to include more specific information regarding the reasons for nominations, including individuals' connections to SMG, in the supporting paperwork;
- Trustees were invited to provide names for future consideration;
- **The Board approved** the award of 4 Fellowships (as per the paper).

LL

BT 03/17 6. **Director's Report**

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

- Treasury was considering a budget reduction to DCMS in the region of 3-6% in 2019-20; a discussion was had as to the best way for SMG to lobby against further cuts to national museum funding;
- Successful development fundraising for the Medicine Galleries had resulted in a very helpful £2m donation;
- The Blythe House project would shortly reach Treasury Approval Point (TAP); issues had recently arisen regarding a lack of an existing tenancy agreement and the partner museums and DCMS were currently negotiating wording for a deed that would hopefully prove sufficient to release funds at TAP;
- The independent Chairman role for the York Central project remained vacant despite an extensive search and interview process;
- The Chief Executive of Manchester City Council was soon to retire; SMG was making efforts to continue its good working relationship with the Council and promote its clear vision for MSI's public realm;
- Trustees were encouraged to provide details of any gaming sector contacts that might be able to assist in improving SMG's involvement in the industry.

All

BT 03/17 7. **Masterplan & Estate Committee**

7.1 A verbal update was given and the following points noted:

- SMG's maintenance contractors had been issued with a performance notice. An underperformance review was underway and additional consultants and contractors had been employed as an interim measure. Crisis management plans had been reviewed and a revised Estates strategy would be a priority for the new Estates Director;
- The programme for the Special Exhibition Gallery project at MSI had been delayed due to damp works and structural issues with the 1830 Warehouse; however remedial work was nearly complete.

BT 03/17 8. **Audit & Risk Committee**

8a **Internal Audit Report and Action Plan 2016/17: Corporate Governance**

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

- The Chairman thanked Board members for their diligence and ongoing contributions which had resulted in a positive effectiveness review, noting that the auditor's recommendations would be taken into consideration and implemented via a detailed action plan;
- It had been suggested that the internal audit programme should focus on the Museum Advisory Boards for its next item on corporate governance, subject to ARC approval.

8b **SMG Health and Safety Report**

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

- It was noted that there was no existing comparative incident data between *Launchpad* and *Wonderlab* at the Science Museum, which in turn probably accounted for a higher number of incidents in the new space as currently recorded;
- **It was agreed** that a Lessons Learned paper for *Wonderlab*, including data on revenue, marketing, and redesign and Health & Safety issues, would be presented to the Board at the next meeting.

JN / JE

BT 03/17 9. **SMG Brand**

9a **National Media Museum**

A presentation was received which gave an overview of recent developments, including the new brand and visual identity for the Museum. In addition:

- Press announcements were scheduled for early March 2017 and would include the unveiling of the Museum's new name (National Science and Media Museum), as well as details of its *Wonderlab* and the upcoming Soyuz tour;
- Good progress had also been made on product branding, wayfinding and future marketing campaigns;
- Plans for the Museum had been well received by stakeholders within the community, including local MPs and the City Council;
- The Board congratulated the Director, NMeM, on recent achievements and wished her success for the upcoming launch event.

9b **Brand Rollout**

A verbal update was given on the direction of travel for SMG's brand. One of the first manifestations of the new Group logo would be the Group strategy document, *Inspiring Futures*, which was due for publication in April 2017.

BT 03/17 10. **Sound and Vision Galleries**

A presentation was received which outlined content development to date and the following points were noted:

- The galleries would focus on sound and image technologies, telling the story of film, photography and television from a holistic perspective with the transition from analogue to digital threaded throughout the interpretation;
- Displays would be divided into two thematic zones: 1) making and 2) sharing/consuming technologies;
- There would be a strong emphasis on the scientific principles behind the development and use of technologies, in line with the Museum's commitment to the STEM agenda as part of the Group strategy;
- Visitors would be encouraged to consider both how technology has changed the world, and also ideas of reality and perception, and fakery and illusion (e.g. hoax photography);

J Quinton-Tulloch left the meeting

BT 03/17 11. **NRM Great Hall**

A presentation was received which outlined content development to date and the following points were noted:

- The Great Hall would focus on the impact of the railways on the world, interweaving stories of technological advancement with strong elements of personal and social history; including the story of the Navy, and content on renowned historic engineers such as Stephenson and Brunel;
- Displays would be collection-based and would cover both national and international railway heritage;
- There would be a strong emphasis on contemporary stories, including high-speed systems and modern engineering, as well as clear linkage with the STEM agenda and the future of the railways.

M Tervey and A McLean left the meeting

BT 03/17 12. **SMG Budget and Plan 2017/18**

12a **SMG Budget 2017/18**

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

- The budget presented a 3-year forward plan and reflected a 6% increase to operating budgets in the next FY, with a £1.2m contingency sum for further allocation throughout the year;
- It was noted that the budget reflected a greater appetite for risk, coming out of a period of austerity, but also assuming a flat Grant-in-Aid settlement;
- It was noted that Finance Committee and the Income Advisory Board were providing an effective challenge to SMG's aspirations by promoting greater budget discipline (e.g. reduced annual contingency), integration of commercial activities with other areas of the museum business, and diversification of SMG's income base.

The Board approved the budget for 2017/18.

12b **SMG Plan 2017/18**

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

- It was noted that the Annual Plan had been restructured according to the agreed SMG strategic priorities;
- It was suggested that SMG Research should be reflected under Collection activity rather than Income.

JE

The Board approved the Annual Plan for 2017/18.

BT 03/17 13. **SMG Management Accounts, January 2017**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The accounts reflected the Q3 and final forecasts for 2017-18 and showed an overall cash surplus of £2.2m.

BT 03/17 14. **Finance Committee**

14a **Reserves Policy and Grant to Foundation**

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

- SMG currently held £1.5m as its unrestricted capital balance and proposed to continue to hold general reserves at this level on the recommendation of Finance Committee. **The Board approved** this as being an appropriate level of general reserves, in accordance with SMG's reserves policy.
- **The Board approved** the payment of a grant to the Science Museum Foundation of any operating surplus arising at the end of the current financial year (subject to the reserves policy and certain designations (as per the paper);

- **The Board approved** a £5m grant application to the Science Museum Foundation.

14b **NRM Surplus Land Transaction**

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

- SMG had identified three areas of the NRM estate that were surplus to requirements and also strategically important to the broader York Central development;
- The agreement would be beneficial to SMG in that it would assist in delivering on two key elements of the NRM Masterplan (securing early funding, and the consent for closure of Leeman Road becoming the responsibility of the buyer);
- Since the paper was circulated, it had become apparent that SMG might be legally obliged to make an overage payment to the previous landowner as per the original conveyance agreement. Negotiations were underway to see if this payment could be waived;
- The Draft Heads of Terms presented in the paper did not represent the final agreement, but a good working draft which was fully endorsed by Finance Committee;
- It was noted that there was a short window in which to conclude the sale, with completion targeted for end of March 2017;
- **The Board approved** the proposed conditional sale of surplus land, subject to outstanding issues being resolved satisfactorily and advice on the wording of the final agreement being sought from the Chair of MEC;
- **It was agreed** that, should the final agreement differ widely from the paper, the Board would be consulted by email.

PK / JN

BT 03/17 15. **Board of Survey Recommendations**

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

BT 03/17 16. **Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board Recommendations**

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

BT 03/17 17. **Minutes and reports of SMG Board sub-committees and working groups**

The papers that had been circulated previously were noted.

Date of next meeting: Wednesday 28 June 2017, Dana Studio, Science Museum

ST 17/03/2017