

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Meeting on Wednesday 30 June 2021 from 14:00-17:00, Microsoft Teams

### Present:

Mary Archer (Chair)  
Brian Cantor  
Judith Donovan  
Sharon Flood  
Russell Foster  
Peter Hendy  
Jo Foster  
Anton Valk  
Ludmilla Jordanova  
Iain McIntosh  
Lopa Patel  
David Phoenix  
Sarah Staniforth  
Steven Underwood  
Fiona Woolf

### In attendance:

Jonathan Newby, SMG Acting Director and Chief Executive  
Shri Mukundagiri, Director of Corporate Services  
Roger Highfield, SMG Science Director  
Deborah Myers, SMG Director of Development  
Julia Knights, Deputy Director, Science Museum  
Sally MacDonald, Director, Science and Industry Museum (SIM)  
Jo Quinton-Tulloch, Director, National Science & Media Museum (NSMM)  
Judith McNicol, Director, National Railway Museum (NRM)  
Helen Jones, Director of Global Engagement and Strategy  
Sian Thompson, SMG Board Secretary

#### 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Ian Blatchford and Ajit Lalvani.

#### 2. Declarations of interest

It was noted that Sarah Staniforth was a trustee of the Landmark Trust (in relation to item 5).

#### 3. Minutes of SMG Board meeting on 3 March 2021 & matters arising

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved and would be signed by the Chair. (Action: MA/ST)

#### 4. SMG Chair's Report

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

- The Board had approved the Remuneration Committee recommendations in their closed session.
- SMG's advertisement for new trustees had been published by DCMS and the recruitment campaign was now live.
- The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport had written to the national museums regarding their involvement in a series of high-profile cultural events taking place in 2022. The Chair had responded outlining SMG's plans.
- The Chair's recent appraisal with DCMS had been very encouraging, and the SMG Executive team had also received complimentary feedback from DCMS officials via the meeting.

#### 5. Acting Director's Report

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

- SMG's reopening had generally gone very well. A current priority for the Executive team was to establish SMG's policy around hybrid working.
- The agreement for the Air and Space Hall at SIM had completed on 30 June. The Estates Operations Director was commended for the skillful negotiation that had brought the matter to a welcome close.
- The Development team was congratulated by the Board for the results over the last quarter.
- NRM had not been successful with its NHLF bid for Vision 2025. This was confidential and embargoed until 13 July.
- SIM was exploring a partnership with the Landmark Trust for Station Master's House (see item 2).

#### 5.1 Managing Director's Report

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. It was also noted that this was a new report which would evolve and iterate for future Board meetings (Action: JN / SMu)

#### 5.2 DCMS Framework Agreement

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

- The new agreement would bring together a number of existing disparate agreements but ultimately replace the existing Management Agreement with DCMS.
- There were a few remaining areas in the agreement which would require further collaboration between DCMS and the wider museum sector (with SMG already acting as sector lead).
- It was agreed that the Chair would work closely with relevant Executive members to apply appropriate

scrutiny to the final version of the new agreement. This version would also be shared with the SMG Board. **(Action: MA / IB / JN / SMu)**

*John Stack, Jack Bertram, Sian Williams, Jessica Bradford and Laura Humphreys joined the meeting.*

6. **Stretching the Digital Frontier: A New Online Ambition for SMG**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. A presentation was given, and the following points noted:

- SMG had huge competition in the STEM market, especially in terms of unstructured or recreational content. However, this was also the area of greatest potential for SMG, in terms of mission delivery and growing audiences online.
- To this end, the recommendation from McKinsey & Co. was to focus resources and effort to delivering unstructured learning content, primarily using third-party platforms (e.g., YouTube).
- The next steps would be for the Executive to review resourcing models for delivering such a step-change in SMG's digital approach. The implementation of the new model would be overseen by the Digital Advisory Board and an update would be given at the Board Strategy Day in October 2021. **(Action: JS)**
- The Board endorsed the direction of travel and thanked McKinsey & Co. for their generous support to date.

*Jack Bertram left the meeting.*

7. **One Collection Update: Transforming collections knowledge and access**

A presentation was given, and the following points noted:

- The One Collection project had given SMG a solid foundation for future collection management work, as well as being a pathfinder for the wider collection engagement work that McKinsey & Co. had identified as being a significant digital opportunity for SMG.
- Examples of digital content and previously untold stories SMG was now able to share online, thanks to the One Collection project, included the Morton collection (industrial chemistry) and the work of Frances Mickelthwait, among many others.
- The Board noted the impressive progress made by the project during a short time, as well as its excellent legacy.

*John Stack, Sian Williams, Jessica Bradford and Laura Humphreys left the meeting.*

8. **Masterplan and Estate Committee: Recommendations**

8.1 The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. **The Board approved** the increase to the Technicians' Gallery budget.

8.2 A discussion was had regarding the Asset Management Plan (AMP). Information from the AMP would be incorporated into the Managing Director's report at future Board meetings. **(Action: JN).**

9. **Finance Committee**

9.1 **SMG Finance Committee: Finance Report**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The Finance team was commended on a greater level of rigour in reporting.

9.2 **SMG Plan: End of Year Report 2020-21**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

10. **Audit & Risk Committee**

10.1 **SMG Audit and Risk Committee: Finance Report**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

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

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. It was noted that there was limited data available due to SMG being closed for most of the period. Going forward, there would be a continued focus on staff wellbeing and return to work.

11. **Collections and Research Committee**

11.1 **Acquisitions and Transfers/Removals Report**

**The Board approved** the recommendation to acquire the contents of the office (and associated property) of the late Professor Stephen Hawking.

11.2 **Collection Information and Collection Access Policy**

The Board approved the policy. It was noted that the policy had been updated to meet new Museum Accreditation standards and also to include cross-references to other existing SMG policies.

12. **Railway Heritage Designation Advisory Board Report**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

13. **Annual Committee Reports**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted.

14. **Terms of Reference for SMG Board sub-committees**

The paper that had been circulated previously was noted. The Board approved the Terms of Reference (including changes where relevant).

15. **Any other business**

The Chair thanked Ludmilla Jordanova and Anton Valk for their dedication and length of service as SMG trustees. It was noted that Peter Hendy would step into the Chair role for the NRM Advisory Board from the autumn.

**Date of Next Meeting: SMG Board Meeting & Strategy Day, 12-13 October 2021, London**

Signed: Ray Archer (SMG Chair)

Date: 12 October 2021