

MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES OF NORTHERN IRELAND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of a meeting of the Board of Trustees held in the Conor Meeting Room,
Cultra Manor at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum on Friday 25 June 2004.

Present: Mrs M Elliott (Chairman)

Sir K Bloomfield

Mr T Shaw

Mr H Bicker

Miss L Beers

Dr A Walker

Ms W Osborne

Ms P Flanagan

Professor E McLaughlin

Mr D Harvey

Mr S Neeson

Mr B Montgomery

Dame G Keegan

In attendance: Mr T Cooke (Chief Executive)

Mrs K O'Dowd (Director of Finance)

Mr M McKee (Director of Operations)

Mr J Gilmour (Director of Development)

Mrs H Henning (Committee Secretary)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr M Adair.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 30 April 2004

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2004, were agreed and subsequently adopted by the Board.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 April 2004

There were no matters arising from the minutes of the Board meeting held on 30 April 2004.

4. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Reform Agenda

The response of Board members to the proposed Reform Agenda was discussed under Reserved Business.

Performance Appraisal for Board Members

Board members were asked to complete the relevant sections of their performance appraisals and return to the Chairman as the deadline for submission to the Department was 1 July 2004.

Awards

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, the Chairman congratulated staff at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum on their recent award as Northern Ireland Visitor Attraction of the Year and staff at W5 for achieving commendations in the Marketing Excellence and Best Tourist Attraction categories at the recent NITB Awards. A letter of congratulation had also been forwarded to Mr Roger Dixon, Librarian at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum on his recent MBE award.

5. BUSINESS OF EXECUTIVE

5.1 Executive Summary

The Board of Trustees noted the Executive Summary for June 2004 which highlighted progress on key issues, significant achievements and key targets for July and August. The Chief Executive referred in particular to the forthcoming launch of the Stonyhurst Mullanphy exhibition on 1 July 2004 and to the success of the recent poetry competition in respect of the Conflict exhibition. The opening of the Omagh Presbyterian Church and the Pound Forge at the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum by the Minister for Culture, Arts and Leisure was also well supported.

The Director of Development reported that the Ulster American Folk Park had also received an offer of funding totalling £173K from the Natural Resources Rural Tourism Initiative divided between exhibition renewal and landscaping and access paths. Other development issues which were considered to be commercially sensitive were discussed under Reserved Business.

The Head of Appeals had approached a number of companies in respect of sponsorship for the Art of the Garden exhibition from Tate Britain. A number of companies had expressed an interest in supporting the exhibition which was scheduled to open at the Ulster Museum in September.

Collections and Scholarship

Board members noted that MAGNI had been awarded full registration status by the Museums, Libraries and Archives (MLA). The Chief Executive thanked the Director of Operations and Head of Collections Services at the Ulster Museum for their efforts in meeting the requirements of the MLA Registration Scheme Standards and Guidelines.

Acquisitions

Board members were advised that the Ulster Museum had recently purchased a spectacular giant fossil fish (Xiphactinus), popularly known as the bull-dog fish. A press launch was scheduled for Monday June 28 in the Dinosaur Gallery at the Ulster Museum.

Financial Position

The Chief Executive said there was nothing further to report in relation to the 2004/2005 Business Plan until the outcome of June monitoring round was known.

Fire at Ballydugan Weaver's Cottage

The Director of Operations reported that the recent fire at the Ballydugan Weaver's Cottage on the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum site had caused considerable damage to the thatched roof. Repair costs were estimated to be in the region of £10 to £15K.

Annual Report 1999 - 2002

Copies of MAGNI's recently published triennial report and accounts for period 1999 to 2002 were circulated to Board members.

Citizenship Project

The Director of Operations referred to the paper detailing MAGNI's Citizenship Project and said that this project had the potential to place MAGNI in an important strategic position as a provider of the citizenship programme. Dr Walker supported this view and said that the Minister for Education had accepted the advice he had been given on the curriculum and that from 2006 onwards, a citizenship programme would form a statutory part of Key Stage 3 and 4 and that elements of the programme would become statutory within the primary curriculum. The CCEA had together with the Education and Library Boards been implementing a citizenship project across around 120 schools and by 2006 he expected all schools to have taken citizenship on board. MAGNI was therefore in an excellent position to make a contribution to that process and Dr Walker suggested that someone from the CCEA join the MAGNI Citizenship Steering Group.

5.2 Corporate Plan 2005 – 2008 Update

The Chief Executive said that DCAL had agreed to work with the MAGNI Executive to bring forward a corporate plan for 2005 – 2008 and he intended to bring forward to the Board of Trustees, by late autumn, a draft plan for discussion and debate. A considerable amount of preparatory work had already been undertaken and the Chief Executive outlined how, over the coming months, the Executive planned to draw together the key strategic issues facing the organisation. Trustees made a number of proposals with regard to the drafting of the Plan which the Executive agreed to consider.

5.3 Approval of Financial Statements for year ended 31 March 2003

The Board of Trustees adopted the Financial Statements for the Year ended 31 March 2003.

5.4 Approval of Loans

The Board of Trustees approved various loans to and from the Ulster Museum (archive copy attached to minutes).

6. TRUSTEES' SUB-COMMITTEES

6.1 Staffing Committee

6.1.1 Approval of minutes of meeting held on 18 May 2004

The Chairman of the Staffing Committee reported that a number of issues were discussed at the meeting including the Staff Protocol. Interviews for the post of

Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development were scheduled for 28, 29 and 30 June and the Staffing Committee noted the appointment of Mr Oliver Hanna as MAGNI Equality Officer.

Committee members were advised that the Performance Management Development System (PMDS) would be progressed as soon as existing short-term staffing difficulties within the HR Department had been resolved. The Director of Operations said that significant progress had been made by the PMDS working group which hoped to have a pilot study in place within the next three months.

Mr Shaw referred to the significant strategic decisions taken by the Board of Trustees at the April away day. Committee members acknowledged that the process of implementing the new structure would add to the period of uncertainty for existing staff and that HR staff were currently working under difficult conditions however it was expected that the Performance Management Development System, the Absence Management System and the Staff Protocol would be complete by the end of the year.

The second annual review of the MAGNI Equality Scheme was due for submission by the end of August and following the completion of this task the Equality Officer who would then focus on the new equality impact assessment timetable to ensure that MAGNI became fully compliant with the Equality Scheme. The Board of Trustees approved the minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 18 May 2004.

6.2 General Purposes and Finance Committee

6.2.1 Approval of minutes of meeting held on 28 May 2004

The Board of Trustees approved the minutes of the General Purposes and Finance Committee meeting held on 28 May 2004.

6.3 Audit Committee

6.3.1 Approval of minutes of meeting held on 28 May 2004

The Board of Trustees approved the minutes of the Audit Committee meeting held on 28 May 2004.

6.3.2 Verbal report of meeting held on 25 June 2004

Sir Kenneth Bloomfield advised Board members that the annual Internal Audit Report for 2003/2004 had been presented to the meeting. Some follow-up action would be required as MAGNI had some difficulty in implementing some of the recommendation due to staffing and financial constraints. It was agreed that the Executive would update Committee members at the next meeting.

6.4 Marketing, Development and Fund-raising Committee

6.4.1 Approval of minutes of meeting held on 28 May 2004

The Board of Trustees approved the minutes of the Marketing, Development and Fund-raising Committee held on 28 May 2004.

7. Whowhatwherewhenwhy (W5)

7.1 Minutes of W5 Board meeting held on 23 April 2004

The Board of Trustees noted the minutes of the W5 Board meeting held on 23 April 2004.

7.2 Minutes of W5 Board meeting held on 18 May 2004

The Board of Trustees noted the minutes of the W5 Board meeting held on 18 May 2004.

7.3 Verbal report of W5 Board meeting held on 22 June 2004

Mr Harvey, Chairman of W5 said that visitor numbers had been affected by the good weather during May however the organisation remained ahead of budget for the first two months of this financial year and he was hopeful that the forthcoming Dinosaur Exhibition would attract significant visitors. Corporate trading maintained a strong position and retailing continued to improve.

The remainder of the Chairman's report was discussed under "Reserved Business" as it was deemed by the Board to contain commercially sensitive information.

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Bank Mandate

The Board of Trustees approved the creation of separate bank account to process Euro receipts and currency exchange.

9. DATE, TIME AND VENUE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was set for Friday, 1 October 2004. The time and venue of the meeting to be confirmed.