

CONFIRMED MINUTES
MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Friday 13 December 2019
The Drawing Room, Cultra Manor, Ulster Folk & Transport Museum

Trustees Present:

Mr Miceal McCoy – Chairman
Mrs Hazel Francey
Mrs Daphne Harshaw
Dr Rosemary Kelly
Dr Leon Litvack
Mr Alan McFarland
Mrs Catherine Molloy

In Attendance

Kathryn Thomson, Chief Executive (CEO)
William Blair, Director of Collections (DC)
Colin Catney, Chief Operating Officer (COO)
Michelle Ashmore, Secretariat
Jourdan Crilly, Assistant Secretariat
Justine Daly, Urban Design & Physical Regeneration Manager (Urban Villages), SIB (Item 8.3)

1. Welcome & Apologies

The Chairman formally welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were received from:

- Professor Earls – Vice Chairman
- Professor Fleming
- Dr McIlroy

2. Conflicts of Interest

The Chairman ascertained that there were no conflicts of interest in relation to the business as set out on the agenda.

There were declaration of interests from Mrs Francey who advised is on the Peace IV steering group and Dr Litvack who advised is now an advisor on the National Records and Archives Board.

3. Approval of Minutes

3.1 Minutes of Meeting held on 27 September 2019

Trustees approved the Minutes of the Board Meeting held on 27 September 2019.

Proposed by: Mrs Francey

Seconded by: Dr Kelly

4. Matters Arising

4.1 Update on Actions from previous meeting

The CEO updated Trustees on the summary of actions from the meeting of 27 September 2019 which had all been completed or were covered by the agenda. The CEO also informed the Board that the Senior Management Team would be joining at the end of the meeting to introduce themselves, outline their areas of responsibility and key objectives.

5. Business of Chairman

5.1 Board Work Plan

The Chairman advised that the Work Plan was provided as approved in October and had been updated to December 2019.

The Board noted the Work Plan.

5.2 Trustee Insight

The Chairman advised that following review from the last Board Meeting that future agendas would include an item for “Trustee insights” as an opportunity for Trustees to update on any relevant intelligence or engagements.

The Board were content with this approach.

5.3 Letter Received By Trustees

The Board acknowledged a return letter from David Small, Chief Executive of Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA). The Board agreed this was a positive response from the Chief Executive and were encouraged by the commitment from NIEA to the ongoing relationship between National Museums NI and CEDaR.

The Board agreed a response should be provided to the individual who had previously written to the Board of Trustees.

6. Loans & Disposals

6.1 Loans approved by GP&F

Trustees noted the loans approved by the GP&F Committee on behalf of the Board at its meeting on 15 November 2019.

6.2 Disposals for Approval by the Board of Trustees

The Board discussed the proposed disposal of Three Clinker-Built Boats. The current specimen condition has been assessed as 'very poor'. The Board noted the efforts made by the team to recover these items and the detail in the reports provided before reaching the recommendation for disposal. The DC advised that some parts can be salvaged and preserved to develop replicas.

The Board approved the disposal and the Chairman signed on behalf of the Board.

Proposed by: Dr Litvack

Seconded by: Mrs Francey

Mr Alan McFarland joined the meeting.

7. Business of Chief Executive

7.1 Chief Executive's Report

The Chief Executive reviewed the above report in discussion with Trustees, commenting specifically on:

- The challenging months experienced from August through to November. 2019/20 has seen a softening of visitor numbers across all sites. In total we are now about 10% behind target and down on last year across all our museums with the exception of UFTM. A number of actions are being taken to build a firmer foundation for the future including, reviews of pricing, admissions policy, website, membership and planning implementation of a revised operating model.
- Master Planning – Phase One for the UFM will focus on the town area along with related storage and has formed the basis of an expression of interest to the National Lottery Heritage Fund new major grants 'Heritage Horizon's' program which was submitted in October.
- Ralph Applebaum Associates have been appointed to work with us to develop a master plan for the next phase of development for the Ulster Museum.
- Important internal progress has been made in the restructuring of the Programming Team which, once complete, will provide the organisation with permanent capacity to deliver community engagement programs for the first time.
- Staff conference was held on Monday 11 November and over 240 colleagues were in attendance.
- The opening deficit of £460k has now been met through in year monitoring.
- DfC have confirmed the Change Fund will operate again next year with bids to be submitted by the end of December.

8. Strategic Priorities

8.1 Draft Business Plan 2020-21

The CEO advised that a first draft of the Business Plan would be submitted to DfC in early January 2020 and a final version would be will be provided in March.

The Board approved the draft Business Plan.

8.2 Economic and Social Impact of National Museums NI

The CEO presented the independent report on the economic and social impact of National Museums NI in 2018-19, highlighting a total economic contribution of £38m and a wellbeing contribution of £36m.

Infographics throughout the report summarise National Museums NIs contribution in terms of the economy, skills for the future, inclusive community engagement, connections to the past and a safe space for team building.

It shows National Museums NI has delivered good value for money against a backdrop of sustained cuts in funding over the past five years, with a funding allocation that has declined by nearly 40% since 2013. It demonstrates National Museums NI is uniquely placed to continue this good work because of its resilience and commitment of the organisation.

The Chairman of the Board reiterated that all public facing documents of NMNI should reflect the role of the Board of Trustees.

The Board noted the report.

8.3 Master-planning at Cultra

Justine Daly, SIB, joined the meeting and presented the outcome of the first phases of the Cultra Estate Master Planning process.

The Master Planning for the Cultra site is a complex process that is critical to securing long-term success and sustainability. The DC outlined the proposed Phase 1 for development focusing on the Ulster Folk Museum and highlighted that an Expression of Interest had been made to the NLHF Heritage Horizons Program.

The Board commended the work to date and endorsed the recommendations.

8.4 Health & Safety Annual Review

The COO advised the Board that a complete revamp of the health and safety procedures has now been completed and is being imbedded within everyday work life at National Museums NI. Safety management now has a culture to report near misses and it continuously working to improve performance.

The COO will continue to present regular in-depth reviews at GP&F. It was also noted that two external reports have been carried out by Zurich Insurance and EY with assurances

being received from both on the improved Health & Safety structure here at National Museums NI.

The Board noted the Health & Safety Annual Review.

9. Board of Trustees' Committees

9.1 Audit & Risk Assurance Committee

9.1.1 Adoption of Minutes of [ARAC] Meeting held on 16 September 2019

The Chairman of ARAC presented the minutes of the September meeting. Trustees adopted the minutes of the ARAC meeting of 16 September 2019.

Proposed by: Mrs Francey

Seconded by: Mr McFarland

9.1.2 Update of Meeting held on 29 November 2019

The Chairman of ARAC spoke to the note of the Committee meeting held on 29 November and highlighted the following:

- Amendments to the Internal Audit work plan
- The Physical Verification of Collections which had seen an increase of 2% from 91% to 93% of audited collections having been located
- Damage and Loss Reporting (which showed an improvement)

Trustees noted the report of the meeting held on the 29 November 2019.

Papers arising from ARAC meeting of 29 November 2019:

9.1.3 Corporate Risk Register

The Board approved the Corporate Risk Register.

9.1.4 Final Report to Those Charged With Governance

The CEO advised that the Final Report to Those Charged with Governance (RTTCWG) was presented to the Board for approval.

The Board approved the RTTCWG.

Items 9.1.3 and 9.1.4 were approved together.

Proposed by: Mrs Francey

Seconded by: Mr McFarland

9.2 General Purposes & Finance Committee

9.2.1 Adoption of Minutes of GP&F Meeting of 30 August 2019

The Chairman of GP&F presented the minutes of the August meeting.

Trustees adopted the minutes of the GP&F meeting of 30 August 2019.

Proposed by: Dr Litvack

Seconded by: Mrs Harshaw

9.2.2 Update on Meeting held on 15 November 2019

The Board noted the report of the meeting held on 15 November 2019.

Papers arising from GP&F meeting held on 15 November 2019:

9.2.3 Performance Reports:

a) Financial Performance

The Board noted the Financial Performance Report.

b) Business Plan Performance Report

The Board noted the Business Plan Performance Report.

9.2.4 Strategy Delivery

a) Health and Safety Update

The Board noted the Health and Safety Update.

9.3 Remuneration Committee

9.3.1 Adoption of Minutes of Meeting held on 24 May 2019

Dr Kelly presented the RC minutes of the May meeting.

Trustees adopted the minutes of the RC meeting of 24 May 2019.

Proposed by: Mr McFarland

Seconded by: Dr Litvack

9.3.2 Update on Meeting held on 15 November 2019

Dr Kelly updated on the RC meeting held on 15 November and confirmed that the CEO was on track against her objectives and overall her performance was 'Satisfactory' to date for the year 2019-2020.

10. FOIs

The Board noted the FOI report.

11. Any Other Business

The Chairman reiterated the importance of self-generated income for the short, medium and long term ongoing succession of the organisation.

12. Short Introductory Presentation by Senior Management Team

12.1 Senior Management Team Structure November 2019

The SMT joined the meeting and each in turn gave a short introduction of their main roles and responsibilities within National Museums NI.

13. Date of Next Meeting

The Chairman advised Trustees that the next meeting of the Board would take place on Friday 27 March 2020.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 1.15 pm

Signed:

.....

Date:

.....

Copies: DfC, Trustees, File, Website

Actions

5.3	Letter to be drafted and sent to NIEA by Board Secretary on behalf of the Board	Secretariat
9.2.2	Special Board meeting to be arranged for the January/February when new Trustees are appointed	Secretariat