

No 270

THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

AT A MEETING ON

TUESDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2021

AT 08.30 A.M.

Present

TRUSTEES

Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint (Chair)
Harris Bokhari OBE
Dame Frances Cairncross DBE FRSE
Hilary Newiss
Robert Noel
Dr Sarah E Thomas
Professor Dame Janet Thornton DBE FRS
Professor Sir Stephen Sparks CBE FRS

In Attendance

Dr Douglas Gurr (Director)
Neil Greenwood (Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services)
Dr Tim Littlewood (Executive Director of Science)
Fiona McWilliams (Executive Director of Development)
Clare Matterson CBE (Executive Director of Engagement)
Bethan Parry (Chief of Staff)
Eva Mota (Executive Officer, Board Secretary)

Alison Lodge (Director of Human Resources) for item 10
Jane Samuels (Cultural Inclusion Lead) for item 10
Laura Popazzi (Head of Diversity and Talent) for item 10
Dr Alex Burch (Director of Public Programmes) for item 10
Paul Kitching (Head of the Natural History Museum at Tring) for item 11
Alex Bond (Senior Curator in Charge, Birds Tring) for item 11
Keith Jennings (Director of Masterplanning and Projects) for item 14

Preliminary

2307 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Simon Patterson
Professor Yadvinder Malhi FRS CBE

2308 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS (TP 21/56)

Declarations of interest and changes to the Register of Interests were made and recorded by the Secretary to the Board.

2309 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 July 2021 (TP21/57)

The Minutes of the meeting of the Trustees held on 6 July 2021 were confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chair.

2310 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2021 (TP 21/58)

The Board reviewed matters arising from the July Board and confirmed that Item 2286 – Museum Operating Plan Quarterly Review and Item 2293 – The Digital Museum, could be closed.

Corporate items:

2311 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

In a closed session of the Board – Hilary Newiss, Chair of the Appointments Committee, reminded Trustees of the appointments process which had been conducted in accordance with OCPA guidance, and in a robust, open and transparent way.

The process had identified one outstanding candidate who fully met all the essential criteria for the role and who was available to meet the full Board of Trustees today.

The candidate then joined the meeting to deliver a short presentation and answer questions from the Trustees. Following this session the candidate left the meeting, the Director and Chair of Trustees withdrew.

The remaining Trustees agreed unanimously:

- (1) to extend the current Chair for up to twelve months until the end of March 2023;
- (2) to invite the nominated candidate to attend the Board of Trustees as an observer from October 2022;
- (3) to appoint the nominated candidate as a co-opted Trustee and Chair of the Board of Trustees at a date no later than 1 April 2023.

The Chair also provided an update on the proposed improvements to the sub-committees and groups of the Board of Trustees, following discussion on this at the Annual Trustees Strategy day in September 2021.

No changes were proposed for the Audit and Risk (ARC), Infrastructure (IC) Committee, Remuneration Committee or the Nomination Committee.

The Commercial Advisory Committee (CAC) will be reshaped when the Commercial Trustee has been recruited, and the Development Advisory committee (DAC) was work in progress, with Frances Cairncross continuing to Chair.

Professor Yadvinder Malhi has agreed to chair the Science Advisory Committee (SAC) at the end of Stephen Sparks' tenure.

The Director explained that the new structure will be progressed in the new year, noting that all committees should be Chaired by a trustee.

Trustee recruitment campaigns to replace Professor Sir John Beddington (who retired from the Board in March 2021) and Dr Kim Winsor (who retired from the Board in August 2021) are ongoing. Further updates will be provided as the process progresses.

2312 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (TP 21/59)

Trustees received a briefing from the Director on the activities of the Museum since the last meeting in July 2021.

The Director gave an overview of recent activities at COP26, where the Museum had partnered with the New York Times and NHM Ambassador David de Rothschild. These activities had proved successful in allowing the Natural History Museum to strengthen the case for Biodiversity on a high profile international stage, and engage with wide audiences, from government to youth activists.

The video of Dippy on Tour was shown to Trustees; the Board noted the great significance of this national project with its vast and diverse audience reach as Dippy moved across the UK.

The Director summarised the Museum's approach to ethical decision making with regard to corporate sponsorship. The Ethics Panel regularly updates the Executive Board on any live cases and decisions are made informed by the Panel's input. Built into the Museum's approach is that Trustees will be informed of significant debate on major proposals and proposals.

Clare Matterson (Executive Director of Engagement) informed Trustees that a brand audit has now been completed and brand refresh concepts will be brought in due course to the Board.

2313 FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR THE PERIOD APRIL – OCTOBER 2021 (TP 21/60)

The report presented by Neil Greenwood (Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services) reflected the financial position to October 2021. Neil Greenwood explained income, expenditure and reserves scenarios based on current projections. The Museum is awaiting news from DCMS on its Grant in Aid allocation. The 3 Year Budget and Financial Plan will be brought to the February 2021 Board.

Items for approval:

2314 NHM BOOK PROPOSAL (TP 21/61)

The Board of Trustees agreed that now would be an opportune moment to prepare to follow on from Stearn's *The Natural History Museum at South Kensington: a history of the museum 1753-1980*, to ensure no history is lost. Trustees approved the NHM Book Proposal and the recommended approach.

Items for discussion:

2315 EQUALITY, DIVERSION AND INCLUSION UPDATE (TP 21/62)

Workforce Action Plan – Alison Lodge and Laura Popazzi

Alison Lodge (Director of Human Resources) and Laura Popazzi (Head of Diversity and Talent) presented their Workforce Diversity Plan. Actions so far are showing positive results and the team are committed to ensuring the progress is maintained across the strands of the workforce plan.

The Executive Board and Management Board at the Museum have undertaken a robust set of diversity training including transgender awareness and anti-racism; Trustees were invited to express their interest to also partake in this training, which can also be arranged for them.

Inclusion and Access Landscape – Clare Matterson and Jane Samuels

Jane Samuels (Cultural Inclusion Lead) presented the EDI and Access update, which showed how the museum is ensuring inclusion and access for diverse audiences. A *Dawnosaurus* video was presented to the board as an example of an event the museum runs for children with neurodiverse conditions. Clare Matterson's Diversity blogs over the last year have been met with good reception, so will continue to be published.

Over the next year the NHM Access statement will be reviewed encompassing all areas of public provision; the Board will be updated in due course.

2316 TRING STRATEGY (TP 21/63)

Trustees had the opportunity to visit the Tring site as part of Board proceedings, across collections, galleries, the library and outside spaces. Alex Burch (Director of Public Programmes), Paul Kitching (Head of NHM@ Tring), and Alex Bond (Senior Curator in Charge, Birds Tring) presented the plan for NHM at Tring, explaining its history, current provision and the opportunities. The plan is: to revision the spaces and public engagement activities for local and broader audiences; to capitalise on the benefits the Museum's new Urban Nature Programme will bring as part of the meadow and outside spaces; and to use the outstanding ornithological Collection to focus on biodiversity research and preservation of birds.

There is also the potential of connecting Tring with the Our Broken Planet programme and it will benefit from the Museum's wider push for accelerated digitisation of the Collection (currently 12% of the Tring collection is digitised). Clare Matterson (Executive Director of Engagement) noted that an exhibit on the natural history of birds were part of the forward public programme.

The Board thanked the team at Tring for the tour and presentation and endorsed the direction of travel for the Tring Strategy.

Regular updates:

2317 URBAN NATURE PROJECT UPDATE & TIMESCALE (TP 21/64)

Clare Matterson (Executive Director of Engagement) updated on the procurement route for the Urban Nature Project (UNP) which will be to go to open tender, with completion estimated for 2023. Keith Jennings (Director of Masterplanning and Projects) confirmed that an update will be available in due course.

2318 QUARTERLY COLLECTIONS UPDATE (TP 21/65)

Dr Tim Littlewood (Executive Director of Science) briefed Trustees on the documents provided by Dr Sarah Long (Head of Registry). The Board noted the following papers regarding the Deinstall of Treasures of the Natural World at Melbourne Museum (January 2022) and Install of Jurassic Oceans at Field Museum, Chicago (February 2022) and the Interim Review of the Human Remains Policy. The Board approved the approach for the Deinstall of Treasures, the install of Jurassic Oceans. The Board also approved the proposed changes to the Human Remains Policy.

2319 HARWELL UPDATE (TP 21/66)

Dr Tim Littlewood (Executive Director of Science) and Keith Jennings (Head of Masterplanning and Projects) presented an update on the NHM@Harwell programme including progress on lease negotiations, government relations and preparing for the move and build.

The Director will update Trustees again in December this year.

Committee reports:

2320 REPORT FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 NOVEMBER 2021 (TP21/67)

Hilary Newiss (Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee) reported on the items discussed at the meeting in November. The Board noted the very sad news of the recent death of Jan Day, the Head of Risk and Assurance. Jan had been a dedicated member of the Museum across her many years of service and would be missed by colleagues across the whole organisation. The Board paid their respects and expressed gratitude for Jan's dedication. Hilary Newiss, the Director and Neil Greenwood will be discussing how best to organise Risk Assurance and Internal Audit going forward.

2330 REPORT FROM THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2021 (TP 21/68)

Robert Noel (Chair of the Infrastructure Committee) gave an update on the September meeting and reported that the Energy Centre contract was ready to be signed by the 13 December 2021.

2331 REPORT FROM THE SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17 NOVEMBER 2021

Professor Sir Stephen Sparks (Chair of the Commercial Advisory Committee) gave a verbal update as the latest minutes were still being drafted. The Science Plan and research themes discussions were progressing positively.

2332 UPDATE ON DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND PERFORMANCE, INCLUDING AN UPDATE ON THE DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 2 NOVEMBER 2021 (TP 21/69)

Dame Frances Cairncross (Chair of the Development Advisory Committee) reported that they had two committee discussions recently, which covered the US trip in February and the 150th Museum Anniversary campaign.

2333 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Board of Trustees meeting in February 2022: The board noted that this meeting would take place virtually, as some attendees may be in the US during that period and it also works well to run a blended schedule of virtual and in person Boards.

Board of Trustees meeting in May 2022: The Chair updated Trustees that this meeting would take place off-site and out London. He suggested that Glasgow could be a possibility and welcomed suggestions for different locations; Trustees were asked to contact him before the end of 2021 so that a decision could be made in early 2022. Trustees were requested to hold 16 May 2022 evening in their diaries to allow for dinner before the meeting date.

Board of Trustees meeting in September 2022: The Board noted there was a current availability clash and it was agreed that a new date would be confirmed.

2334 EVENT DATES FOR THE DIARY (TP 21/70)

These have been noted.

2335 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS (TP 21/71)

The rolling agenda for future meetings was noted.

2336 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

(Please note that meetings take place between 9am to 2pm)

2022

- 23 February
- 17 May
- 5 July (Annual staff summer party in the evening)
- 13 September (09.00-17.00 – Annual Trustees' Strategy Day) date change TBC
- 15 November

SKM

29 March 2022

