

**No 275**

**THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM**

**AT A MEETING**

**ON 16 MAY 2023**

**AT 10.00 A.M.**

**Present**

**TRUSTEES**

Sir Patrick Vallance (Chair)

Mr Harris Bokhari OBE

Professor Yadvinder Malhi FRS CBE

Professor Dame Janet Thornton DBE FRS

Dame Frances Cairncross DBE FRSE

Dr Sarah E Thomas

Mr Robert Noel

**In Attendance**

Dr Douglas Gurr (Director)

Neil Greenwood (Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services)

Jennifer Cormack (Director of Development)

Bethan Parry (Director of Strategy and Innovation)

Dr Alex Burch (Director of Public Programme)

Amanda Hart (Executive Assistant to the Director, Chair and of Board of Trustees)  
(Board Secretary)

Stacey Frier (Head of Governance and Government Relations)

Ayesha Kamran, (Governance and Government Relations Officer) (Secondary Board Secretary)

Freya Stannard (Head of National Programmes), item 9

Emilia Ciesla (Senior Learning Manager, Community, Youth and Participation), item 12

Emma Slater (Community and Youth Engagement Manager), item 12

Dr Sarah Long (Head of Registry), item 13

**Preliminary Items:**

**2431 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Mark Read and Professor Dame Jane Francis.

**2432 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS (TP 23/16)**

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

#### **2433 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2023 (TP 23/17)**

The minutes of the meeting of the Trustees held on 21 February 2023 were confirmed as a true record and signed off by the Chair.

#### **2434 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 21 FEBRUARY 2023**

All matters arising were noted as completed or to be addressed within the agenda.

#### **Corporate items:**

#### **2435 CHAIR'S REPORT**

Sir Patrick Vallance welcomed the new Director of Development, Jennifer Cormack, who has joined from the Royal Society and brings a wealth of knowledge and experience across the education and charity sectors.

The Chair notified the Board that interviews for the three vacant trustee positions (legal, public engagement, and Digital), had taken place and that he hoped to update the Board on the completion of the process as soon as possible.

#### **2436 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (TP 23/18)**

The Director provided an update on major projects and programmes since the last meeting and was delighted to share with the Board a record number of visitors and sales for the Titanosaur: Life as the Biggest Dinosaur exhibition.

The Director highlighted progress against the Museum's Operating Plan through its most recent Quarterly Review, discussing the end of year position and transition to the 2023/24 Operating Plan. Key highlights reported on the Critical Few 2023/2024 - a set of major critical and cross-cutting deliverables to focus on throughout the plan year.

Key updates were reviewed, including: NHM Unlocked, Urban Nature Project, Progressing the Hall of Human Biology Redevelopment, imbedding Science Themes, plans for developing the Biodiversity Intactness Index (BII), Energy Centre Redevelopment, RECODE and the Behaviours Framework.

The Director updated the board on a commercial science opportunity underway. The Director flagged that the museum's approach to innovation and data are covered in the 'hard questions' paper for this meeting, and invited Trustees interested in this subject to get in touch to do more detail can be shared.

#### **2437 FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR THE PERIOD APRIL – MARCH 2023 (TP 23/19)**

The Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Services provided an overview of the current financial position, detailing a forward look for the upcoming financial year. The strength of income streams, particularly from self-generated revenue was a highlight.

#### **Items for approval:**

#### **2438 FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT AND MUSEUM FREEDOMS UPDATE (TP 23/20)**

The Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Services gave an overview of the Framework Agreement, as obligated for completion and agreement by the Department for Culture, Media, and Sport (DCMS.)

Responsibilities contained within the Agreement were highlighted to the Board as well as reporting requirements. It was explained that the agreement was closely related to the Museum Freedoms agreed with the Cabinet Office and HM Treasury.

The Board requested one amendment regarding investment in growing the Museum's collections.

Trustees approved the recommendation to delegate authority for the Chair and Director to sign off the Framework Agreement.

#### **2439 MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT (TP 23/21)**

The Board approved the Modern Slavery Statement to be published on the Museum's website and asked for further detail on contract types within Front of House teams.

#### **Items for Consideration:**

#### **2440 DEEP DIVE INTO TOUGH QUESTIONS THE MUSEUM IS CONSIDERING (TP23/22)**

The Director summarised and presented some questions for consideration by the Board. The discussion addressed several issues, including collections spaces and collecting, global collaboration, and future plans for innovation. The Board discussed the maintenance of the Waterhouse Building, in the interest of preserving collections and increasing the number of galleries open to the public.

The Board agreed that the questions would be discussed in further detail in future meetings, on a case-by-case basis. Trustees captured additional areas for consideration such as approach to audiences, Collaboration, Policy, Education/Learning.

**Action: The Director to present a timetable to the Board, detailing when the issues will be discussed.**

#### **2441 EDI DEEP DIVE/COMMUNITY PLAN (TP23/23)**

Ms Freya Stannard, Ms Emilia Ciesla and Ms Emma Slater presented the NHM's Community Plan to the Board, outlining a new approach to interacting with local audiences and visitors built on embedding learning from audience research to engage with structurally excluded audiences.

The Board commended the plan, noting that the new Audience, Diversity and Inclusion lead, starting next week, will support this strategy, and discussed options for scalability of the model.

#### **Standing items:**

#### **2441 NHM UNLOCKED (TP23/24)**

The Director provided an update on the NHM Unlocked Programme which was noted by the Board.

#### **2443 PUBLIC SPACE PLAN – TRING DEEP DIVE (TP 23/26)**

Dr Alex Burch updated the Board on the principles developed through the Public Space Plan and how these are applied to the Museum site at Tring. A short-term plan has also been identified, which forms part of a broader partnership with potential donors.

#### **2444 QUARTERLY COLLECTIONS REPORT, COLLECTIONS POLICY AND ACCREDITATION (TP 23/27)**

Dr Sarah Long presented the most recent updates on the Collections, highlighting recent issues with cold chain transportation. The Board noted the issues and ongoing activities to address them.

#### **Annual Report for Noting:**

#### **2445 ANNUAL SECURITY REPORT 2022/23**

The Board noted the Annual Security Report for 2022-23.

#### **2446 ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT 2022/23**

The Board noted the Annual Health and Safety Report for 2022-23.

#### **2447 ANNUAL COLLECTIONS ASSURANCE 2022/23**

Mr Harris Bokhari relayed assurance to the Board through an Audit and Risk perspective. The Board noted the Annual Collections Assurance for 2022-23.

#### **Items to note:**

#### **2448 REPORT FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (TP 23/28)**

Mr Bokhari summarised a report on managing policies and key strategic risks highlighted at the last session. The Board noted the update from the meeting held on 03/05/2023.

#### **2449 REPORT FROM THE SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Professor Yadvinder Malhi provided an update as the Chair of the Science Advisory Committee which was noted by the Board.

#### **2450 REPORT FROM THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE (TP 23/29)**

Mr Robert Noel presented a summary as the Chair of the Infrastructure Committee and the meeting Minutes held on 28/04/2023. The Board noted the update.

#### **2451 REPORT FROM NHM FOUNDATION MEETING**

Dame Frances Cairncross updated the Board on the Foundation's recent activities.

#### **2452 EVENT DATES FOR THE DIARY (TP 23/30)**

Event dates for the diary were noted.

#### **2453 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS**

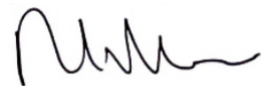
The rolling agenda for future meetings was noted. The deep dive into tough questions the museum Board are considering will be centralised, and a programme of topics for discussion will be scheduled over the course of the year.

#### **2454 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair thanked the Board and concluded the meeting.

#### **2455 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS**

- 4 July
- 12 September (09.00-17.00 – Annual Trustees' Strategy Day)
- 14 November (virtual)

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