

No 274

THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

AT A MEETING

ON 21 FEBRUARY 2023

AT 10.00 A.M.

Present

TRUSTEES

Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint (Chair)
Harris Bokhari OBE
Professor Yadvinder Malhi FRS CBE
Professor Dame Janet Thornton DBE FRS
Mark Read
Professor Dame Jane Francis DCMG FRS
Dr Sarah E Thomas
Mr Robert Noel
Sir Patrick Vallance (Chair Designate)

In Attendance

Dr Douglas Gurr (Director)
Neil Greenwood (Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services)
Dr Tim Littlewood (Executive Director of Science)
Adam Farrar (Director of Commercial and Visitor Experience)
Jennifer Francis (Head of Philanthropy)
Bethan Parry (Director of Strategy and Innovation)
Amanda Hart (Executive Assistant to the Director of Board of Trustees) (Acting Board Secretary)
Stacey Frier (Head of Governance and Government Relations) (Observer)
Ayesha Kamran, (Governance and Government Relations Officer) (Secondary Board Secretary)

Keith Jennings (Director of Estates, Projects, and Master planning), for items 11,13
Felicia Anderson (Design Development Construction Manager), for item 11
Melissa Colin (Project Manager), for item 11
Dr Alex Burch (Director of Public Programme), for item 15
Lucy Clark (Head of Public Space Programme), for item 15
Dr Sarah Long (Head of Registry), for item 16

Preliminary Items:

2407 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Dame Frances Cairncross DBE FRSE

2408 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND REGISTER OF INTERESTS (TP 23/01)

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

2409 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2022 (TP 23/02)

The minutes of the meeting of the Trustees held on 15 November 2022 were confirmed as a true record and signed off by the Chair.

2410 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MEETING HELD ON 15 NOVEMBER 2022

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

Corporate items:

2411 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair welcomed Professor Dame Jane Francis to the board and proceeded with introductions across all Members. Lord Green highlighted that this is his final Board of Trustees meeting before departing as Chair, Sir Patrick Vallance will assume his role as Chair following Lord Green's departure and chair the next Board in May.

2412 DIRECTOR'S REPORT (TP 23/03)

The Director provided an update on the activities of the Museum since the last meeting, including the concept of a multi-institution strategy around nature-based solutions for the next COPs (both climate and biodiversity); progress on NHM's EDI Strategy and Thriving behaviour framework – which has been implemented methodically into NHM appraisal systems as of March 2023. Trustees encourage dialogue to ascertain feedback on how well embedded the new structure is across the organisation.

The board commended the level of detail within the report and were delighted to note that high total general visit admissions could result in NHM being the UK's most visited indoor attraction in 2022, following NHM's success in 2021.

2413 NEW OPERATING PLAN 2023/2024 (TP 23/03)

The Director presented to the board NHM planning framework and an update on the creation of the new Operating Plan for 2023/24, including the new 'Critical Few' for 23/24, a small set of major critical and cross-cutting deliverables to focus on throughout the plan year. Progressing the RECODE programme to replace NHM collections management system was highlighted to Trustees. It was agreed that Trustees would receive an update on progress against the critical few at each Board meeting.

2414 FINANCIAL REVIEW FOR THE PERIOD APRIL – DECEMBER 2022 (TP 23/04)

Mr Neil Greenwood provided an update on the Museum's financial position and presented the report which demonstrates the actual income and expenditure to 31 December 2022 (Q3 \ P9) for the financial year 2022-23 and a forecast outturn for the year compared with the Original Budget for 2022-23 approved by the Trustees in February 2022.

Items for approval:

2415 APPROVAL FOR BUDGET 2023/2024 AND FINANCIAL PLAN 2023/2026 (TP 23/05)

Mr Neil Greenwood provided an update on the Museum's financial position, setting out the Budget for 2023/2024 and projections for the following two years through to 2025/2026.

The board approved both budget 2023/2024 and Financial Plan 2023/2026

2416 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (TP 23/06)

The Audit and Risk Committee which took place on 1 February 2023 was inquorate (Trustees Agenda item 17 (TP23/11), due to Trustees tenure ending ahead of finalised recruitment of new Trustees and replacement of ARC members; Therefore, it was agreed that any decisions requiring approval would be brought to the Board of Trustees meeting on 21 February for formal approval and minuting.

The Board of Trustees accordingly approved:

- Proposed changes to the Museum's Investment Policy
- Change of Trustee CCLA signatory mandate
- Annual external audit fees

2417 APPOINTMENT OF TRADING COMPANY BOARD OF DIRECTORS (TP23/07)

The Natural History Museum Trading Company is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Natural History Museum responsible for the commercial activities of the Natural History Museum, which are not deemed as primary purpose under the Museum's charitable objects. The profit from the Company is gifted to the Museum on an annual basis under a deed of covenant.

The Board approved the proposed nominated appointed Directors of the Natural History Museum Trading Company:

- Patrick Vallance (Trustee and Chair of Trustees with effect from 22 February 2023) who will become Chair of the Company.
- Mark Read (Trustee)
- Doug Gurr (Museum Director)

Items for Consideration:

2418 NHM Unlocked RIBA STAGE II.

Mr Keith Jennings, Ms Felicia Anderson and Ms Melissa Colin presented the board with an update on NHM Unlocked RIBA STAGE II. Key Themes included Thames Valley Science Park location, developing the building design, (collection, science, and people spaces) as well as sustainability goals. The Board noted next steps as well as the crucial role of the Infrastructure Committee in implementing its transformation.

The chair highly praised the approach, plans and designs, stating the importance of NHM Unlocked to NHM's entire vision and strategy.

Standing Items:**2419 NHM UNLOCKED GOVERNMENT APPROVALS PROCESS.**

Dr Tim Littlewood presented a presentational overview of NHM Unlocked outlining the Business Case Progress and Operating Plan deliverables. Full approval is awaited from the Treasury. The Board noted the preferred options for the NHM Unlocked case.

2420 ITEM FOR APPROVAL: DELEGATED AUTHORITY FOR AGREEMENT FOR LEASE (TP 23/08)

Mr Keith Jennings provided an updated report on progress of the Agreement for Lease with the University of Reading for the agreed plot at Thames Valley Science Park. The Infrastructure Committee considered progress and endorsed a request (31.01.2023) that a sub-committee of Trustees with delegated powers is formed to approve entering into an Agreement to Lease, comprised of Sir Patrick Vallance, Dr Douglas Gurr, Mr Neil Greenwood and Mr Robert Noel.

Trustees approved the request.

2421 URBAN NATURE PROJECT – UPDATE

Mr Adam Farrar and Mr Keith Jennings presented a summary progress on plans for UNP. The Board noted the update.

2422 PUBLIC SPACE PLAN (TP 23/09)

Dr Alex Burch provided an update on the progress of the Public Space Programme (PSP), part of the overall plans to transform the sites at South Kensington and Tring. The ambition is to transform and reimagine the Museum's public spaces so that NHM can deliver excellent visitor experiences, bring to life NHM strategy, and cater for audiences now and into the future. To note, the Expert Advisory Panel is for the Children's Gallery and will work closely with the gallery development team.

Trustees will be kept up to date via a new standing item for the Public Space Plan at each quarterly Board meeting.

2423 QUARTERLY COLLECTIONS REPORT (TP 23/10)

Dr Long provided Trustees with an update on collections activities related to their duty of care and shared information pertaining to the report. The report covered information to provide assurance to Trustees relating to preventive conservation from 1 October – 31 December, environmental data for the final quarter of 2022 running from 1 October to 31 December, collections data for the period 1 October – 31 December, and for other information until 31 January.

Items to note:**2424 REPORT FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE (TP 23/11)**

The Chair congratulated newly appointed Mr Harris Bokhari as Chair of the Audit and Risk committee. Mr Bokhari summarised a report on managing policies and key strategic risks highlighted at the last session, alongside the Board noting the Minutes from the meeting on 1st February.

2425 REPORT FROM THE SCIENCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TP 23/12)

Professor Yadvinder Malhi updated the Board on the recent Committee and recalled major topics including the status of NHM Unlocked.

2426 REPORT FROM THE INFRASTRUCTURE COMMITTEE (TP 23/13/14)

Mr Robert Noel presented a summary as the Chair of the Infrastructure Committee and the meeting Minutes held on 31st of January. The Board approved the revised terms of reference for the Infrastructure Committee.

2427 EVENT DATES FOR THE DIARY (TP 23/15)

Event dates for the diary were noted.

2428 AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE BOARD MEETINGS

The rolling agenda for future meetings was noted. NHM Foundation items will be presented at the next Trustees Meeting. Trustees requested a future item on RECODE and regular updates on the Critical Few.

2429 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair noted that Mr Neil Greenwood will be retiring from the Museum July 2023. The board showed their sincere gratitude for all the hard work and dedication Mr Greenwood has demonstrated in over 25 years of service and congratulated him on all achievements as Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Services.

This would be the last Board meeting as Chair for Lord Green of Hurstpierpoint. The Director extended his gratitude on behalf of the Trustees for providing over nine years of expertise, wisdom, and commitment to transforming the organisation from a passive observer of the biodiversity crisis to an active participant in seeking to mend our broken planet.

In recognition of Lord Green's outstanding contribution of over more than two full terms and in the hope and expectation of continued engagement with the Natural History Museum, the Museum was delighted to invite Lord Green to become an Emeritus Trustee.

2430 DATES OF NEXT MEETINGS

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

