

National Galleries of Scotland Board of Trustees

Minute of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held in the Boardroom, The Dean Gallery, Belford Road, Edinburgh on Monday 30 November 2009 at 1400 hrs.

Present: Ben Thomson, Chairman
Ian Barr
Ray MacFarlane
Professor Richard Thomson
Marc Ellington
Ruth Wishart
Herbert Coutts
Anne Bonnar
Alasdair Morton
Richard Burns

In Attendance: John Leighton, Director-General
Nicola Catterall
James Holloway
Simon Groom
Michael Clarke
Catrin Tilley
Jacqueline Ridge

Apologies: James Knox
James Dawnay

Secretariat: Elaine Anderson

Action

1 Introduction & Chairman's Business

The Chairman identified the main items of business for the meeting: the Titian campaign; and the GMA and Dean visitor numbers.

It was noted that the Audit & Risk Committee would be continuing to review financial models for NGS and this would be discussed at the Board in January.

2 Minutes

2.1 Minute of the Meeting of 5 October 2009

The minute of the meeting of 5 October was approved with minor amendments.

It was noted that the public part of the minutes for the meetings to August 2009 were now on the website.

2.2 Minute of the Portrait Gallery Meeting of 3 September 2009

Confidential minute approved.

3 Matters Arising

3.1 Budget Planning

Mr Morton reported on the recent discussion at the Audit & Risk Committee on budget planning in relation to potential government cuts. This would be discussed in detail at the meeting in January. It was noted that the Committee would be considering the full range of risks. It was noted also that NGS was exploring shared service options with other national collection bodies.

Colleagues noted that there was a Trading Company Shadow Board meeting on 18 January, which would feed into the Audit & Risk Committee and Board of Trustee meetings later that month.

Mr Coutts suggested that the Papal state visit in 2010 was an opportunity for NGS to stage a relevant exhibition or event. It was noted however that it may be difficult to fit something into the schedule.

4 Director-General's Report

4.1 Public Sector Reform Bill

Mr Leighton updated colleagues on progress with discussions with the other national collections and Scottish Government. The Education Committee had listened to objections and had recommended to the Finance Committee removal of the order making powers. In addition a definition of "necessary protection" was under discussion and positive feedback on this point had been given.

4.2 Culture Sport Glasgow

Mr Leighton reported on a recent meeting he and the Chairman had attended with Culture Sport Glasgow to explore areas for a more structured approach to collaboration. Both parties were keen to develop a formal partnership agreement, although it was important that this was not at odds with the outcome of the Museum Think Tank.

4.3 Honorary Doctorate

Trustees congratulated Mr Leighton on his recent award of an honorary doctorate from the University of Edinburgh.

4.4 American Associates

Trustees noted the proposal for the re-launch of the American Associates in April 2010.

Open Business

5 Gallery of Modern Art/Dean Gallery: Visitor Trends

Ms Tilley explained the visitor projections for 2009, which had been informed by the previous five years' figures.

Colleagues discussed the figures in relation to Artist Rooms and noted that little funding had been expended to sustain interest in the collection. There was no ticket income and therefore no additional funding to spend on marketing. The loss of the visitor bus and a reduction in the no 13 bus service had also contributed to the drop in numbers. There had been a steady downward trend in numbers over the last three years.

Mr Groom explained that the recent re-hang was about seeking repeat visits through regular room changes based entirely on the permanent collection and complemented by Artist Room displays. Professor Thomson congratulated the GMA on the amazing transformation of the gallery and the way in which the programme changes in 2010 would surely encourage those repeat visits.

Colleagues discussed the 2009 programme and what might have brought in higher numbers in previous years.

Mr Leighton explained the fundamental shift taking place in NGS's approach to modern and contemporary art eg through the use of artists as ambassadors and the Artist Rooms initiative. It was noted that, once the artistic programme was established, the GMA and Dean would have to work on their identity.

6 Board of Trustees Sub Committees: Terms of Reference & Membership

6.1 Audit & Risk Committee

Mr Morton, as Chairman of the Audit & Risk

Committee, offered reassurance that the risk register covered both financial and non-financial risks. It was noted that the risk framework was being revised.

The revised terms of reference were approved.

6.2 Remuneration Committee

Terms of reference noted and approved.

7 Board of Trustees: Sub-committee Minutes

7.1 Board Review Committee: 2 September 2009

The Chairman reported on his recent meeting with the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments in Scotland (OCPAS) to discuss the process for the appointments process. He was keen to have greater involvement of trustees in the process.

It was noted that Audit Scotland had been informed through its recent consultation with board members that the appointments process was unnecessarily complex.

7.2 Audit & Risk Committees: 3 September 2009 & 16 November 2009

Mr Morton reported back on both meetings. The Annual Accounts had been approved and had now been laid before Parliament. At the most recent meeting, the committee had discussed budget scenarios in detail and concern had been raised about the current stock holding. This was being taken forward by the Trading Company Board.

8 Gallery and Department Reports

8.1 National Gallery

Mr Clarke reported on the very successful run for the Turner & Italy exhibition in Budapest and Ferrara.

The report was noted.

8.2 Portrait Gallery

Mr Holloway updated trustees on progress with the Portrait Gallery project. Building work was now underway and fundraising was on schedule.

The portrait of Charles Fraser had been unveiled in the lobby of the NG. A Raeburn portrait and Peter Lely display were also on show at the NG.

Mr Burns and Ms Wishart left the meeting.

The Chairman was keen to have on the trustee report details of anything that was not meeting the timetable or any cost over-runs. He also considered that NGS should publicise who had purchased each figure in the Frieze.

Mr Holloway asked trustees to note the purchase of a portrait of Alex Salmond by Fionna Carlisle.

8.3 Gallery of Modern Art

Mr Barr expressed concern that the Artist Rooms Learning Co-ordinator post was only for one year. It was noted that the post may be extended for another year if additional funding became available.

Mr Morton queried the list of works identified as available to purchase, noting that the purchase grant was currently frozen. Mr Groom explained that he was only flagging them at this stage.

8.4 Visitor Figures: August 2009

Noted. Colleagues discussed the gathering of visitor data on Artist Rooms. Numbers were being collected by other venues, but it had not been decided how this should be articulated. The difficulty in collating consistent partnership activity data was noted, although NMDC was seeking resolution across the sector.

8.5 Public Programme 2009-11

Noted.

9 Any Other Business

9.1 Strategy Meeting 2010

A note would go out to trustees before Christmas to outline the plan for the strategy meeting on 12

BT/EA

February.

Colleagues were keen to pick up again on the topic of partnership and asked if discussion could be resurrected at Board committee level. Mr Leighton however considered that it was an integral part of the public programme and therefore belonged to the Senior Management Team. It was not useful to separate it out from core programme planning. It was agreed that the topic would be picked up at the strategy meeting.

10 **Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 25 January 2010