National Galleries of Scotland
Board of Trustees

Public minute of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held virtually via MS Teams on Monday 25 January 2021 at 1330hrs.

Present: Benny Higgins (Chairman)
Alistair Dodds
Audrey Carlin
Edward Green
Tari Lang
Rucelle Soutar
Andrew Wilson
Nick Pearce
Wullie Watt

In Attendance: Sir John Leighton, Director-General
Jo Coomber
Jacqueline Ridge
Bryan Robertson
Line Clausen Pedersen
Valerie Urquhart (items 1-8)
Aileen Dunlop and Fiona Stewart (item 8.1.1)

Secretariat: Elaine Anderson

Open Business
1 Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

2 Chairman’s Business

Committee Membership:
Trustees approved the appointment of Lynn Richmond to the Remuneration Committee.

3 Minute of the meeting of 23 November 2020

The minute of the meeting of 23 November was approved as a correct record.

4 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5 Director-General’s Report

The Director-General updated colleagues on the effect of lockdown on the galleries. There was a greater sense of fatigue and stress with individual colleagues, therefore there was a
greater emphasis on well-being at the current time.

The furlough scheme had been extended for a large number of staff.

The programme was still relevant although the exhibitions and displays were closed. The pop-up café at M2 and the grounds remained open and there was a significant amount of content online. The plan was to reopen when allowed with the same programme. The exhibitions and displays had been re-cast. Further details will be shared later in the meeting.

Strategic planning has been challenging as much of the time has been taken up with operational matters. The timetable for delivery will be revised. On the subject of equalities, the newly established steering group has been working hard with colleagues in the background. It was hoped to return to the Board with an update in the next few months. Our relation to the climate emergency is also progressing and we work towards harmonizing efforts alongside COP 26.

6 Reopening and Recovery: Update on Progress
(part redacted)

Mr Robertson updated trustees on the recent closure and management of the well-being of staff. Only essential work continues onsite. Remote working colleagues’ focus is on planning for reopening. The learning from the last time will assist in managing the reopening process.

Trustees felt reassured about both our external facing role and the attention being paid to colleagues’ welfare.

It was considered that the service the galleries offered supported peoples’ mental health. Reopening as soon as possible was therefore an important consideration.

9 Reports

9.1 One Collection

Ms Clausen Pedersen outlined the latest acquisitions, including *Intervals 2* by Bridget Riley, gifted by the artist.

9.2 Public Programme 2020-21

Ms Clausen Pedersen offered an overview of the forthcoming programme, explaining that Harryhausen was going to be extended to February 2022 to compensate for the current closure. There were plans to share the content more widely digitally.
Ms Clausen Pedersen also explained the sensory trail in the grounds of M1 and the consideration being given to how we optimise that offer.

9.3 **Public Engagement Quarterly Report**

Ms Coomber outlined the Public Engagement report. The e-commerce offer had been very successful.

Ms Coomber noted that visitor numbers dropped significantly when travel restrictions were put in place and this was replicated across the sector.

M1 and M2 had high visitor satisfaction ratings. The feedback from visitors had been consistent and would feed into plans for reopening.

9.3.1 **Digital Content**

Ms Coomber shared details of the current offer to the public during closure. There were trails at the Moderns, audio described tours, a takeaway service at M2 and smartify trails.

There were a number of projects happening across the community. Digital content was also being developed. Ms Coomber outlined some of the digital content online, including some new video tours from curators. A Harryhausen digital package was in planning and would be launched in the coming weeks.

10 **Compliance & Risk**

10.1 **Performance Management 2020-21: Q1 & Q2**

The results for Q1 and Q2 were noted.

10.2 **Risk Registers**

10.2.1 **Strategic Risk Register**

Noted.

10.2.2 **Coronavirus Risk Register**

Noted.
10.3  **Safeguarding (Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults)**

Nothing to report.

11  **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

12  **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Monday 29 March 2021 at 1330 hrs