

## National Galleries of Scotland Board of Trustees

Public minute of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held in the Boardroom, Modern Two on Monday 12 September 2022 at 1400hrs.

**Present:**

Audrey Carlin (Chair)	Nick Pearce
Rucelle Soutar	Willie Watt
Chris Sibbald	Kate Sang
Hannah Rudman	Andrew Wilson
Jim McConville	
Apphia Campbell	

**In Attendance:**

Sir John Leighton, Director-General  
Jacqueline Ridge  
Bryan Robertson  
Line Clausen Pedersen  
Valerie Urquhart  
Adam Christie  
Frances Fowle (item 8.1.1)

**Apologies:**

Benny Higgins  
Lynn Richmond

**Secretariat:** Elaine Anderson

### ***Open Business***

#### **1      Declarations of Interest**

Mr Wilson declared that he was now Chair of the Edinburgh International Culture Summit.

Ms Rudman declared that she had become a director of Highlands Rewilding Ltd.

#### **2      Chairman's Business**

##### *Retirements and New Members:*

Ms Carlin noted that Dawn Thomson and Gemma Gray would be joining the Board on 1 October 2022 and would attend the next meeting of the Board.

Mr Pearce and Mr Watt were retiring from office on 30 September 2022 and were attending their last meeting of the Board. Ms Carlin thanked both for their eight-year tenure.

##### *Sub-committee membership:*

Following a number of recent changes to the Board, the Chairman had reviewed the membership of the sub-committees

and proposed new members. Trustees ratified the new members of the sub-committees as outlined in the paper.

Audit & Risk Committee:  
Jim McConville to Chair  
Lynn Richmond to join as a new member.

Major Capital Programme Committee:  
Andrew Wilson to join as a new member.

Ethics Committee:  
Chris Sibbald to join as a new member.

Board Review Committee:  
Rucelle Soutar and Apphia Campbell to join as new members.

Remuneration Committee:  
Kate Sang to join as a new member.

### **3 Minutes**

#### **3.1 Minute of the meeting of 13 June 2022**

The minute of the meeting of 13 June was approved.

### **4 Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising which were not already covered on the agenda.

### **5 Director-General's Report**

The Director-General noted with sadness the death of Her Majesty the Queen. NGS communications had been paused during the period of national mourning and the galleries would close on the day of the funeral on 19 September. Thanks were passed on to Adrian Lawrie, Head of Security and Safety, for his commitment to managing protocol and related security matters.

The Queen's long association with NGS was noted. Her portrait had been hung in the Portrait Gallery to celebrate her life, alongside a Book of Condolence. It was noted that NGS had a portrait of King Charles already in the collection, which would be displayed in due course.

The Director-General reported back on proceedings at the recent Cultural Summit, noting the concerning move by Russia to target Ukrainian heritage and culture. Alongside the desperate need for more funds, Ukrainian colleagues expressed an interest

in long-term partnerships to help raise awareness of their heritage and culture.

Mr Wilson noted that Edinburgh was twinned with Kyiv, Ukraine and opportunity may be presented to progress relations and support the city.

*Cost of Living Crisis:*

The Director-General noted the on-going pay negotiations and constraints within which NGS was operating. Alongside pay there was the wider challenge of government funding and limits to self-generated income.

*Committee Evidence:*

The Director-General reported that he had been asked to provide evidence to the Constitution, Europe, External Affairs and Culture Committee in relation to the budget for culture.

*Modern Two:*

Redacted.

*Climate Change:*

Ms Rudman commented on the recent weather challenges which had led to flooding at Modern Two. It was noted that a number of repairs were planned for the period of closure. The connection to climate change and related risk was noted. It was considered that this could be evolved as part of the environmental response plan. The Director-General noted the vulnerability of the collection on paper in relation to the threat of water ingress.

## 6 Reports

### 6.1 Collection Report

Ms Clausen-Pedersen shared the recent work of the collection and research team, noting some of the acquisitions which had entered the collection. The Alison Watt exhibition had been very successful earlier this year and had given the galleries the opportunity to acquire three works by the artist.

*Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion:*

Ms Clausen Pedersen noted the Learning & Engagement activity over the summer period which brought in families and community groups and assisted in meeting EDI targets.

Ms Clausen Pedersen offered some background to the artist Alberta Whittle and the NGS exhibition planned for

2023. The artist had represented Scotland at the Venice Biennale in 2022.

*Van Gogh Discovery:*

Ms Ridge shared the detail of the exciting discovery of the Van Gogh drawing behind the painting in NGS's collection. There had been major international interest and there were further conversations to be had as to how this positive impact could be exploited.

**Reserved Business**

6.1.1 **Proposed Acquisitions**  
Redacted.

**Open Business**

6.2 **Public Programme 2022-24**

The forthcoming public programme was noted.

6.2.1 **A Taste for Impressionism Exhibition**

*Presentation from Frances Fowle, Senior Curator*

Ms Fowle shared some of the images from the current Impressionism show, which had predominantly been drawn from the permanent collection.

Ms Fowle explained the background to some of the collectors.

Ticket sales were doing well, with 50% of the target reached by end-August. There were still two months to run. Online retail sales had also been good, with a number of new items commissioned which related to the permanent collection and had long-term value.

Ms Rudman noted that the City Arts Centre had a themed exhibition based around women collectors and modern art. Ms Fowle also noted the recent reopening of the Burrell and the fact that the museum collection centred around the collector, William Burrell.

The ticket price had been reduced for September and October with a view to encouraging local audiences into the gallery.

Trustees noted the next exhibitions to open at the galleries.

The Director-General noted that further exploration was required on the balance between permanent collection and ticketed exhibitions.

Trustees thanked the Ms Fowle and the team for the successful exhibition.

### 6.3 **Audience & Digital Quarterly Report**

Mr Christie updated trustees on recent work carried out by the Audience and Digital teams. Visitor numbers had been high over the summer. Over 49% of the visitors to the Mound had been international.

Digital content: there were 22,000 subscribers to the digital channels currently, showing steady growth.

The mystery visitor programme continued, which had led to very positive scores across the galleries. 87 nominations were made by those visitors for front-of-house colleagues operating over and above their duties. It was noted that the mystery visitors were people who had not visited before and were of a particular demographic requested by NGS.

### 6.4 **Chief Operating Officer's Report**

Mr Robertson shared an update on recent events across the COO team. The Visitor Assistant roles had been filled, but there were challenges with some of the technical roles which were currently vacant.

*Pay Negotiations:*  
Redacted.

## ***Reserved Business***

### **7 Financial Matters**

#### **7.1 Finance Report**

7.1.1 **Management Accounts Q1 to June 2022**  
Redacted.

7.1.2 **Scottish Government Update: Budget & Pay Policy**  
Already covered.

#### **7.2 Audit & Risk Committee**

7.2.1 **Report from the Audit & Risk Committee: 31 August 2022**

Redacted.

**7.2.2 Annual Accounts 2021-22**

Redacted.

**7.2.3 Minutes from the Audit & Risk Committee Meetings: 31 May 2022**

Noted.

**8 Major Projects Progress Reports**

Redacted.

***Open Business***

**9 Compliance & Risk**

**9.1 Performance Management 2022-23: Q1**

Noted.

**9.2 Strategic Risk Register**

Noted.

**9.3 Code of Conduct**

The Code of Conduct was approved.

**10 Any Other Business**

It was noted that Ms Clausen Pedersen would be going on maternity leave towards the end of the year. Interim arrangements were in hand.

**11 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 28 November 2022 at 1400 hours.