

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 13 June 2022 at 1400hrs.

Present: Benny Higgins (Chairman)
Rucelle Soutar
Chris Sibbald
Hannah Rudman
Jim McConville
Lynn Richmond
Willie Watt
Kate Sang
Andrew Wilson

In Attendance: Sir John Leighton, Director-General
Jacqueline Ridge
Bryan Robertson
Line Clausen Pedersen
Valerie Urquhart
Adam Christie
Siobhan McConnachie (items 6-7)
Anne Lyden (item 8.1.1)

Apologies: Nick Pearce
Audrey Carlin
Apphia Campbell

Secretariat: Elaine Anderson

Open Business

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

2 Chairman's Business

The Chairman noted that he and the Director-General were meeting with Alister Jack at Westminster this week to discuss capital funding opportunities.

3 Minutes

3.1 Minute of the meeting of 28 March 2022

The minute of the meeting of 28 March 2022 was approved as a correct record, with minor amendment.

4 Matters Arising

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

Reserved Business

5 Director-General's Report

Redacted.

6 Safeguarding (Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults): New Policy

Siobhan McConnachie, Head of Learning in attendance

Ms McConnachie updated trustees on the revised guidance on Safeguarding, which refreshed the previous Child Protection policy. The policy was very similar, but the procedures and guidance had changed considerably. The responsibility belonged to every member of staff to implement this policy.

Paragraph redacted.

7 Equalities, Diversity & Inclusion: Outcomes

Siobhan McConnachie, Head of Learning in attendance

Ms McConnachie updated trustees on progress with developments on the approach to equalities. A series of commitments were agreed and published online last year. A cultural change was key to moving this approach forward, mainstreaming equalities as part of our day-to-day work.

Much work was being done across the different departments to embed this new approach. Further work was required to establish how we monitor progress.

Trustees commended progress made. Ms McConnachie noted that some of the commitments were hard to quantify and monitor. Quarterly updates were useful.

Mr Wilson joined the meeting.

The Chairman was keen for NGS to promote publicly what was being done in this area, perhaps through Holyrood magazine.

The Director-General noted the recommendation from Government for development of an Empire and Slavery museum, which focused on one area of equality.

The Board commended progress made in this area.

Open Business

8 Reports

8.1 Collection Report

Ms Clausen Pedersen updated trustees on recent work in the collection and collections management area. It was noted that EDI featured throughout the acquisitions and loans programmes.

There was much work being carried out in the community through the learning team and trainee and internship positions were being implemented.

Reserved Business

8.1.1 Proposed Acquisitions

Redacted.

Open Business

8.2 Public Programme 2022-24

Ms Clausen Pedersen updated trustees on the current exhibitions programme. The Impressionism show was due to open at the RSA in July.

There had been good feedback on the Census exhibition, which had recently taken place at the Portrait Gallery.

It was noted that a five-year programme was currently under development.

8.3 Audience & Digital Quarterly Report

Mr Christie shared some of the work which had been carried out in the audience and digital team over recent months. It was noted that visitor numbers had reached 73% of pre-Covid levels, demonstrating the recovery. Month by month the numbers were increasing.

The audio guide sales were increasing. Visitors had to bring their own headphones and devices as it was hosted through Smartify. Feedback had been positive about the content.

Mr McConville joined the meeting.

Trustees asked how the film content was being received. It was noted that the You Tube content is bringing in higher and higher numbers each year.

8.4 **Chief Operating Officer's Report**

(partially redacted)

Key Concerns:

Mr Robertson noted some of the key challenges and concerns for the team. Recruitment was an issue, with salary levels not meeting market expectations.

Pay policy was a challenge due to inflation pressures. In addition there were capital funding challenges.

It was noted that the unions had balloted staff to ask if they wished to reinstate face coverings for staff.

Scottish Government Environmental Fund:

Funds were being made available to support organisations to meet the Net Zero target for 2045. Further exploration was required to establish if NGS could benefit from the funding opportunity.

Cyber Security:

Mr Robertson reported that cyber essentials accreditation had been achieved in May. Significant progress had been made in developing systems and improving cyber security. Further investment was required in some legacy systems to decrease the risk. It was noted that in the event of an incident, NGS was confident in its business continuity.

Processes now needed to be tested and this would happen in due course.

Reserved Business

9 Financial Matters

Redacted.

10 Major Projects Progress Reports

Redacted.

Open Business

11 Compliance & Risk

11.1 Performance Management 2021-22: Q4

Noted.

11.2 Strategic Risk Register

Noted.

11 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

12 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 13 September 2022 at 1330 hours.