

National Galleries of Scotland Board of Trustees

Minute of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held virtually via MS Teams on Tuesday 14 September 2021 at 1330hrs.

Present:

Benny Higgins (Chairman)	
Alistair Dodds	Lynn Richmond
Chris Sibbald	Audrey Carlin
Edward Green	Hannah Rudman
Tari Lang	Andrew Wilson
Willie Watt	Rucelle Soutar

In Attendance:

Sir John Leighton, Director-General
Jo Coomber
Jacqueline Ridge
Bryan Robertson
Line Clausen Pedersen
Leanne Maberley (item 7.3)
Valerie Urquhart (items 8-9)
Gillian Gibson (item 10)

Apologies: Nick Pearce

Secretariat: Elaine Anderson

Open Business

1 **Declarations of Interest**

There were no new declarations of interest.

2 **Chairman's Business**

Nothing to report.

3 **Minute of the meeting of 14 June 2021**

The minute of the meeting of 14 June 2021 was approved as a correct record, with minor amendment.

4 **Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

Reserved Business

Items 5-6 redacted

Open Business

7 Reports

7.1 One Collection

Ms Clausen Pedersen noted the successful acquisition at auction of *Female Head Design* by George Dutch Davidson. Trustees approved the purchase retrospectively (using the Cowan Smith trust fund), which had been approved off-line by the Chairman prior to auction. The bid for the second picture (*Boats on a River*) was unsuccessful.

7.2 Public Programme 2021-22

Ms Clauden Pedersen updated trustees on the current programme. Thomas Joshua Cooper and Alison Watt had both opened at the PG over the summer and had attracted positive feedback from visitors. Isaac Julien was also on show at Modern One.

7.3 Public Engagement Quarterly Report

Ms Coomber noted that the PG audio guides had been launched. Guides were in planning for the SNG also once the new galleries had opened. There had been good feedback from visitors, which would feed into the development of the SNG guide. Trustees were encouraged to try them out.

Ms Coomber shared information about the new programme "Your Art World". This was an online art hub for children and young people, a national programme with challenges set peer to peer supported by resources from artists and NGS. It offered lots of new ways into art, peer-to-peer and was in the early stages of its launch.

A new style of marketing had been developed, focusing on the art and grounds and reaching out to new audiences.

Trading Company: most trading outlets were now open. The café at M2 was currently closed to ensure that the PG café could remain open. Staffing shortages were creating issues with service. The cafés and shops had all been trading well. It was planned to open the PG shop at the end of October until early January to catch the Christmas trade.

Colleague events had been planned for November and it was hoped to involve trustees in this also.

Ms Carlin commended the approach to the marketing, asking whether we monitored if it was working. Ms Coomber noted that in our exit survey (sent to everyone who books online) we will be able to track what prompted the visit and that data will be analysed to see if it attracted different audience types, along with looking at digital analytics. Ms Carlin also commented that she was enthused about the Your Art World online hub and asked about plans to launch it. Ms Coomber asked for any ideas about how to launch it or for any connections to organisations that it would be relevant to.

Ms Lang noted the change in NGS's social media profile which had recently been developed and commented that this was a positive move, aiding our international position. The energy which had come through social media should be captured and developed.

Ms Rudman considered that the audio guides offered a different experience to the Smartify app and allowed people to learn in a way which suited them best.

Reserved Business
Item 7.3.1 redacted

Open Business

7.4 Chief Operating Officer's Report

Mr Robertson noted the two new appointments of a Head of Estates and Director of Operations. The Director of Operations had a wealth of experience in visitor experience and security from major museums and galleries.

The IT team was pulling together the material for cyber essentials accreditation and would be ready to apply by the end of this month.

A new HR system had been installed and was making a difference already in terms of managing HR operations.

Mr Robertson also reported that a five year plan had been developed for the estate to establish work required and related costs.

Reserved Business

Items 8-9 redacted

10 **Environmental Response Plan**
Presentation from Gillian Gibson, Sustainability Officer

Mr Robertson introduced the report, thanking Mr Sibbald for his input at development stage.

The organisation needed to think more radically about how we manage our buildings to continue our journey towards net zero. Partnership with other organisations were being developed to have the relevant conversations and share information.

Ms Gibson outlined the need for change and what NGS's role is in relation to the climate emergency.

We are working with our suppliers and partners to tackle the crisis and a working group is in place to consider ways in which we can improve working practices. A number of initiatives were already in place to assist the process, including travel for staff and artworks.

Digital working was also a key part of the change in approach. We have recently changed how we work, therefore the carbon footprint had been impacted positively.

A decision needed to be made on where we want to get to. Do we want to be a leader in the field?

The report would be launched internally and externally in November to align with COP 26.

Ms Rudman commended the report, suggesting how we can develop the digital side of information sharing. Trustees were generally impressed with the comprehensive report. It was noted that the current work being carried out by the environmental consultants on the estate will feed into the plans. Intermediate planning will also be carried out over the coming years to 2045, with the first four years being the focus of the current planning period.

Ms Lang considered that there was a great need to engage colleagues fully in the developments. This was not just a process.

11 **Compliance & Risk**

11.1 **Performance Management 2021-22 Q1**

The results for Q1 were noted.

11.2 **Strategic Risk Register**

The changes to the risk register were noted.

11.3 **Safeguarding (Protection of Children & Vulnerable Adults)**

Nothing to report.

12 **Any Other Business**

It was noted that the advert for new trustees was now live.

13 **Dates of Next Meetings**

Monday 22 November 2021 at 1330 hours.