

National Galleries of Scotland Board of Trustees

Public minute of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held in the Boardroom at Modern Two on Monday 30 January 2023 at 1330hrs.

Present:

Benny Higgins (Chair)	
Audrey Carlin	Andrew Wilson
Lynn Richmond	Gemma Gray
Chris Sibbald	Hannah Rudman
Kate Sang	Jim McConville

In Attendance:

Sir John Leighton, Director-General
Bryan Robertson
Anne Lyden
Imogen Gibbon
Valerie Urquhart
Adam Christie
Isabella Miller
Gillian Gibson (item 6.4.1)

Apologies:

Rucelle Soutar
Dawn Thomson
Apphia Campbell
Jacqueline Ridge

Secretariat: Elaine Anderson

Open Business

1 Declarations of Interest

There were no new declarations of interest.

2 Chairman's Business

The Chairman welcomed Ms Miller, Ms Lyden and Ms Gibbon to their first meeting.

3 Minutes

3.1 Minute of the meeting of 28 November 2022

The minute of the meeting of 28 November was approved.

4 Matters Arising

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

5 **Director-General's Report**

Redacted.

Open Business

6 **Reports**

6.1 **Collection Report**

Ms Gibbon and Ms Lyden presented some of the recent acquisitions and planned displays.

Ms Lyden noted that there had been a number of activities delivered in relation to Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion and the collection.

Ms Lyden shared a recent publication, Putting Ourselves in the Picture, which related to a project in North Edinburgh led by Fast Forward-Women in Photography.

The exhibition Conserving Scotland's Art was on display at the SNG currently and trustees were encouraged to attend.

Discussion redacted.

6.2 **Public Programme 2023-24**

Ms Gibbon reported on the current and planned exhibitions programme. Artists at Work had proved very popular and had embedded itself in the programme.

It was noted that the Contemporary Gallery at the Portrait Gallery would be trialled as an events space later this year.

Ms Gibbon noted that Ms Whittle would be onsite from mid-March to install her exhibition and engage with the wider collection and colleagues.

Ms Lyden reported that the Taylor Wessing Photographic Portrait Prize exhibition would be coming to NGS later this year. The submissions included a number of Scottish artists.

Colleagues noted the plans for promoting the Grayson Perry show and some of the retail opportunities which would arise from exhibiting such a popular and well known artist.

6.3 **Audience & Digital Quarterly Report**

Mr Christie reported on the strong numbers viewing NGS digital content on You Tube. The Not Seeing Straight video had been particularly popular.

There had been a significant amount of colleague engagement activity, which had been well received.

Mr Christie shared some of the recent media activity.

Trustees noted the visitor numbers for 2022, which demonstrated a positive and strong recovery on pre-Covid levels. Modern One and the SNG had fared particularly well.

The branding project was nearing completion, which included a new uniform for front-of-house colleagues.

Ms Rudman noted that the LBGT community was shortly to be celebrating filmmakers, which may be an opportunity for NGS.

6.3.1 **Our Focus Audiences**

Mr Christie shared the work recently carried out on developing the audience framework. The focus audiences tied into NGS strategic priorities. It was noted that EDI was fully integrated into the focus audiences and was not a separate strand.

Detail redacted.

Trustees commended progress in this area and questioned whether there was more NGS could be doing to develop digital presence and make it work harder for us. Mr Christie explained that there was much potential, given the resources to develop it further.

The Chairman noted that it would be useful to hear progress in this area on a regular basis.

It was noted that the trackable KPIs were already captured quarterly and this would be extended.

Ms Gray commented that NGS could look at increasing video content on social posts as the engagement levels were far higher than with a static image. NGS should ensure that engagement online is as strong as it could be.

6.4 **Chief Operating Officer's Report**

Industrial Action:

Discussion redacted.

Staffing:

Mr Robertson noted the challenges in hiring staff for the estates team. The market was making this very difficult. Ms Carlin queried when this might become a compliance issue if sufficient staffing could not be secured.

SNG Project:

The teams were working closely with the contractors to establish the final works required for opening.

Jim McConville left the meeting.

6.4.1 **Environmental Response Plan**

Gillian Gibson, Sustainability Officer in attendance

Ms Gibson shared progress made on the delivery of the Environmental Response Plan. Environmental themes were running through many current projects and day to day work.

Significant discussions had taken place around the transport of artworks and how carbon emissions could be improved.

Ms Gibson explained some of the improvements made to the website to make sustainability activity in relation to the collection more accessible.

Ms Gibson noted that NGS had the Green Tourism gold award across all sites and this would be re-assessed this year.

Training for colleagues was underway and a net zero estates plan had been established.

Ms Rudman made reference to COP15 and the agreement signed by all countries to make us all nature positive. Should we be adapting our phraseology to reference the “nature positive”?

Reserved Business

7 Financial Matters

7.1 Finance Report

Discussion redacted.

8 Major Projects Progress Reports

Discussion redacted.

Open Business

9 Compliance & Risk

9.1 Safeguarding

Ms Anderson shared with trustees the need for safeguarding training which would cover the duties and requirements of NGS trustees in this regard.

Trustees noted the training date of 27 March, prior to the next Board meeting.

10 Any Other Business

The Director-General informed trustees of the desire to set up an evening event at Modern One in the coming weeks. Ms Anderson would be in touch to make arrangements.

11 Date of Next Meeting

Monday 27 March 2023 at 1330 hours.