

**National Galleries of Scotland
Board of Trustees**

Minute of the meeting of the Board of Trustees held in the Boardroom, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art Two, Belford Road, Edinburgh on Monday 30 March 2015 at 1400 hrs.

Present: Ben Thomson, Chairman
Alistair Dodds
Lesley Knox
Tari Lang
Benny Higgins
Tricia Bey
Willie Watt
Catherine Muirden
Edward Green

In Attendance: Sir John Leighton, Director-General
Christopher Baker
Nicola Catterall
Jacqueline Ridge
Simon Groom
Michael Clarke
Alan Gibson
Sean McDonald, Tessa Quinn and Ashley Beamer (item 7 only)

Apologies: Professor Nick Pearce
Nicky Wilson
Alasdair Morton
Frank Gribben

Secretariat: Elaine Anderson

Action

1 Chairman's Business

The Chairman noted that it was Alasdair Morton's last meeting and thanked him, in absentia, for his contribution over the previous eight years as a Trustee, particularly in relation to the Audit & Risk Committee.

It was also Alan Gibson's last meeting and the Board thanked him and wished him well.

The Chairman noted the agenda for the Board Strategy day on 27 April which would focus on photography, digitization and collection development. Three guests had been invited to dinner the evening before: Susan Rice, Alex Callander and Karen Watt from Scottish Government.

2 Minutes

2.1 Minute of the Meeting of 26 January 2015

The minute of the meeting of 26 January 2015 was approved.

3 **Matters Arising**

Trustees noted the excellent news about the success of the Stage One HLF bid for the Scottish National Gallery.

4 **Code of Conduct**

Noted and approved.

Strategy

5 **Corporate Plan 2015-18**

Trustees noted the requirement for the Corporate Plan to inform government subsidy as well as being the principal planning tool for NGS. It was noted also that the last major re-write was in 2013 and the Plan presented was an amendment to that Plan.

Trustees discussed whether a smaller trustee group should be formulated to drive forward philanthropy. It was suggested that this could be looked at more closely through the development of the Business Plan. Following discussion, it was agreed to bring the Head of Development to a future meeting to discuss options further.

JL/EA

It was noted that exhibitions only just cover their costs and Trustees queried whether that was the right political message. Costs were fairly certain, but the main risk was that income was estimated when the budget was set.

On economic value, some further and clearer information was required. The current text considered the impact on the economy, but it should perhaps be more focused on the creative industries.

It was noted that the final version of the Plan, including KPIs, would be brought to the Board for final approval in June 2015.

5.1 **Budget 2015-16**

The 2015-16 budget was circulated for Board approval following consideration by the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Senior Management Team was thanked for their hard work in creating a strong platform for 2015-16 onwards. It was noted that NGS does pay the

Scottish living wage as a minimum.

The 2015-16 budget was approved.

6 **Business Plan 2016-20**

Mr Leighton explained the content of the outline Business Plan, which focused on increasing income and decreasing dependence on government subsidy. The detail had already been discussed at Audit & Risk Committee in February. Greater alignment internally was critical to the implementation of the Plan.

Following detailed discussion, it was suggested that an hour be set aside at the June Board meeting to debate the Plan.

6.1 **Key Messages**

Trustees noted the paper, which outlined key messages to be used when out and about promoting NGS. Trustees discussed the number of visitors to Generation across the country (1.33m). Trustees requested similar key messages for the two capital projects.

7 **Digital Plans & Progress Report**

Sean McDonald, Tessa Quinn and Ashley Beamer joined the meeting.

Mr Gibson presented on progress with digital plans across NGS. Key projects included: an optimised website, with a refreshed look, to increase traffic through mobile devices; Generation, which created a multi-channel digital offer which was well received and delivered a high level of engagement; Digitisation project funded through HLF Skills for the Future.

Looking ahead, a major project was being developed to improve the IT infrastructure and content framework. A new customer-facing IT system will be implemented, including a redesign of the online collection and retail offer. A new content framework would help to create more digital content and improve audience engagement.

The Chairman noted the good progress and thanked the team. Sean McDonald, Tessa Quinn and Ashley Beamer left the meeting.

8 Departmental and Gallery Reports

8.1 Scottish National Gallery

Mr Clarke presented the SNG report. It was noted that over 70,000 visitors had attended the Frick exhibition of NGS masterpieces in New York.

It was hoped to have an event at Fort Worth at the end of June and a Scottish-themed event in Sydney in October. Trustees were asked to provide details of any contacts they may have in either area.

8.1.1 Acquisitions: Requests for Use of Trust Funds

François Hippolyte Lalaisse (1810-1884), *Two studies of a Centaur and a male nude during and after combat* – approved.

Auguste Allongé (1883-1898), *Woodland Landscape* – approved.

8.1.2 Gift (Over £50,000)

Achille-Etna Michallon, *Birch Trees on a Rocky Incline: Fontainebleu* about 1821-1822 – approved.

8.2 Scottish National Portrait Gallery

Mr Baker presented the report, drawing attention to the Ewan Morrison self portrait which had been received as a gift from the artist.

Trustees were asked to note the increase in visitor numbers and forthcoming event dates.

8.3 Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

Mr Groom presented the report.

8.3.1 Acquisition Request (already approved): Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) *Bouteille et Verre sur une Table* 1912

The purchase was noted, having been approved outwith the meeting cycle and purchased at auction.

8.4 Public Engagement

The report was noted.

8.4.1 **Visitor Figures: December 2014 – February 2015**

Noted.

9 **Public Programme**

9.1 **Public Programme 2014-20**

Noted.

10 **Any Other Business**

There was no other business.

11 **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Board of Trustees will be held on Monday 15 June 2015.

Meeting dates for 2016 were noted.