

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND  
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 MARCH 2021 (VIRTUAL)**

**Present:**

Mr Ian Russell	Chairman
Ms Ann Allen	Trustee (from item 9 onwards)
Prof Mary Bownes	Trustee
Mr Gordon Drummond	Trustee
Mr Christopher Fletcher	Trustee
Dr Brian Lang	Trustee
Ms Lynda Logan	Trustee
Dr Catriona Macdonald	Trustee
Ms Jandy Stevenson	Trustee
Ms Eilidh Wiseman	Trustee
Dr Laura Young	Trustee

**In Attendance:**

Dr Chris Breward (CB)	NMS Director
Mr Keith Pentland (KP)	Director of Finance, Planning & ICT
Ms Julie Brown (JB)	Head of Corporate Policy & Performance
Ms Helen Ireland (HI)	Director of External Relations
Mr Xerxes Mazda (XM)	Director of Collections
Ms Ruth Gill (RG)	Director of Public Programmes
Ms Lynn Smith (LS)	Director of People
Mr Peter Williamson (PW)	Managing Director of NMSE Ltd and Director of Visitor Experience

**Apologies:**

Mr Adam Bruce	Trustee
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**PRELIMINARIES**

It was noted that the terms of appointment of Gordon Drummond and Chris Fletcher would come to an end on 31 March, and that this was their last Board meeting. The Chairman thanked Chris and Gordon for their significant contribution as Trustees of National Museums Scotland since 2013. Throughout their tenure they had been involved in a wide range of matters, providing support to the organisation and championing the Museum externally. The Chairman confirmed he would present Gordon and Chris with the National Museums of Scotland medal, in appreciation of their service, later in the year when it was possible to meet in person.

**PRESENTATION**

Stuart Allan (Keeper of Scottish History & Archaeology), Hugo Anderson-Whymark (Senior Curator, Prehistory, Scottish History & Archaeology) and Emily Freeman (Treasure Trove Manager, Scottish History & Archaeology) gave a presentation on the work of the Treasure Trove Unit and invited questions from the Board. Trustees extended their thanks and appreciation for the presentation.

**ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES**

1.1 Apologies were received from Adam Bruce.

**ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 03 FEBRUARY 2021**

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 03 February 2021 were approved.

**ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING**

3.1 Matters arising from the last meeting were as follows:

- Minute 5.3: The Chairman reported that this matter was currently under consideration and an update would be provided at a later Board meeting.

**ITEM 4 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

4.1 Brian Lang declared an interest in a fellow cultural organisation which was undertaking a major project, arising from his role as Chair of Dovecot Studios.

4.2 As Fellows of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, Jandy Stevenson, Chris Fletcher and Catriona Macdonald declared an interest relating to a property matter noted in the Director's Report to Trustees.

**ITEM 5 – DIRECTOR'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES**

**NMS (2021) 08**

5.1 The Director presented his report which had been circulated and gave a verbal update on: the latest plans for reopening; the recent (online) staff presentation; staff wellbeing; and on the positive engagement in the reporting period with our trade unions, other cultural bodies and the City of Edinburgh Council.

5.2 Mary Bownes highlighted the likely synergies with Edinburgh Zoo around our work on biodiversity, and Helen Ireland responded to a Trustee query regarding grant applications.

**ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT**

**NMS (2021) 09**

6.1 Keith Pentland presented his report which had been circulated and highlighted recent expenditure on Covid-related safety measures.

6.2 The Board noted that:

- Current information suggested that a surplus would be achieved for this financial year.
- Budget holders were being monitored against the forecast endorsed at the September Board meeting.

**ITEM 7 – BUDGET 2021/22**

**NMS (2021) 10**

7.1 Keith Pentland presented the paper which had been circulated and summarised the main changes to the 2021/22 Budget since the draft was considered at the last Board meeting.

7.2 Following a short discussion and reassurance that Scottish Government had committed to the required financial support, the Board of Trustees:

- Approved the 2021/22 Budget.
- Noted the Financial Plan for 2022/23 and 2023/24.

7.3 The Chairman and Lynda Logan confirmed that the Finance Committee would be working closely with K Pentland in planning for the financial challenges ahead in the next two financial years.

**ITEM 8 – COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH REPORT**

**NMS (2021) 11**

8.1 Xerxes Mazda presented the Collections & Research Report and gave a verbal update on endeavours that had come to fruition since it was circulated.

8.2 The Board of Trustees noted the report and congratulated the organisation on its recent acquisitions and successful research funding and grant applications.

8.3 It was also noted that Xerxes Mazda was leaving NMS to take up the role of Head of Collections & Curation at the British Library in London, and that this was his final Board meeting. The Chairman thanked Xerxes for his considerable contribution to NMS over the last five years and for the Collection Directorate's many successes over that time.

**ITEM 9 – EQUALITIES & DIVERSITY MAINSTREAMING  
REPORT 2017-21 AND EQUALITY OUTCOMES 2021-25**

**NMS (2021) 12**

9.1 Lynn Smith presented the report which had been circulated.

9.2 Following discussion, the Board of Trustees:

- Noted the progress made by the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Steering Group together with colleagues across the organisation in terms of reaching a position of compliance.
- Approved the completed Mainstreaming Report 2017-2021 as it currently stood and its findings, subject to the agreed addition.
- Approved the new Equality Outcomes for 2021-2025.

9.3 It was agreed that, once completed, the section in the Mainstreaming Report on Gender Pay would be delegated to the Director for approval.

9.4 Lynn Smith confirmed that she would keep the Personnel & Remuneration Committee updated on progress during the next reporting period.

**ITEM 10 – SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**NMS (2021) 13**

10.1 Ruth Gill presented the paper which had been circulated. It provided an update on: our Public Duty under the Climate Change Act; the organisation's restructured Sustainable Development Group and its ambitions; and the development of a new vision for sustainable development.

10.2 There followed a discussion covering topics such as: societal and cultural change; public and staff engagement; carbon footprint; and our estate.

10.3 The Board noted the direction of travel and progress made to date.

**ITEM 11 – APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD COMMITTEES  
& RELATED GROUPS**

**NMS (2021) 14**

11.1 The Board of Trustees:

- Endorsed the recommendations in the paper.
- Noted the appendix which detailed the associated, updated Trustee membership (from 01 April) of the: Board Committees; the subsidiary of the NMS Board (NMSE Ltd); the NMS Charitable Trust Board; the American Foundation for National Museums Scotland; and the Research Strategy Group.

11.2 The Chairman thanked Trustees for all their invaluable work on the Board Committees and related groups and conveyed his appreciation to those chairing the Committees.

**ITEM 12 – REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES**

**(i) Finance Committee**

12.1 The Chairman noted that the approved minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 02 February and the draft minutes of the meeting held on 01 March 2021 had been circulated.

**(ii) Estates Committee**

12.2 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 03 March 2021 had been circulated.

**(iii) Audit & Risk Committee**

12.3 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 10 March 2021 had been circulated.

12.4 Jandy Stevenson (Chair) highlighted the update on external audit and the recent internal Health & Safety audit.

**(iv) National Museums Scotland Enterprises Ltd Board**

12.5 Gordon Drummond (Chair) gave an update on the NMSE Ltd budget, staffing matters, hospitality & events, and on retail activity (online sales).

12.6 It was noted that the next meeting of the NMSE Ltd Board will now be held on 26 March 2021.

**(v) Personnel & Remuneration Committee**

12.7 Eilidh Wiseman (Chair) reported on the key issues from the Committee.

12.8 The next meeting of the Personnel & Remuneration Committee will be held on 13 April 2021.

**(vi) Nominations & Governance Committee**

12.9 The Chairman gave a verbal update on public appointments. As planned, our three new Trustees would commence their appointments on 01 April and join the next Board meeting. He added that they had agreed to their proposed Board Committee appointments [ref. paper NMS (2021) 14].

12.10 The next meeting of the Nominations & Governance Committee will be held on 26 May 2021.

**(vii) Acquisitions Committee**

12.11 Brian Lang (Chair) confirmed that all current matters had been covered under Minute Item 8.

**ITEM 13 – FORWARD PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS**

**NMS (2021) 15**

13.1 The Board noted the Forward Programme of Business.

**ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

14.1 The Board conveyed their sincere thanks and best wishes to Gordon Drummond and Chris Fletcher and looked forward to seeing them in person later in the year.

**ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

15.1 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 16 June 2021.