

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 29 NOVEMBER 2023 AT THE
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH**

Present:

Mr Ian Russell	Chairman
Prof Mary Bownes	Trustee
Ms Mimi Brophy	Trustee
Mr Adam Bruce	Trustee
Mr Stephen Dando	Trustee
Prof Manuel Fernández-Götz	Trustee
Mr Graeme Gibson	Trustee
Ms Beth McKillop	Trustee
Prof Richard Oram	Trustee
Ms Jandy Stevenson	Trustee
Prof Ian Wall	Trustee
Dr Laura Young	Trustee

In Attendance:

Dr Chris Breward (CB)	NMS Director
Mr Keith Pentland (KP)	Director of Finance & Resources
Ms Julie Brown (JB)	Head of Corporate Policy & Performance
Dr Sam Alberti (SA)	Director of Collections
Ms Ruth Gill (RG)	Director of Public Programmes
Ms Helen Ireland (HI)	Director of External Relations
Mr Peter Williamson (PW)	Managing Director of NMSE Ltd

Apologies:

Ms Ann Allen	Trustee
Prof Monojit Chatterji	Trustee
Dr Bridget McConnell	Trustee

PRELIMINARIES

The Chairman welcomed new Trustees Richard Oram and Manuel Fernández-Götz to their first Board meeting.

PRE-BOARD SESSION

John Giblin (Keeper, Global Arts, Cultures & Design Department) gave an overview of the recent developments and current issues within the Global Arts, Cultures & Design Department and invited questions from the Board.

Margaret Maitland (Principal Curator, Global Arts, Cultures & Design Department) gave a presentation on *Collecting Egyptomania*.

Trustees extended their thanks for the overview and presentation.

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from Ann Allen, Monojit Chatterji and Bridget McConnell.

ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 SEPTEMBER 2023

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 were approved.

ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Matters arising from the last meeting were taken under the main agenda items.

ITEM 4 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 It was noted that there were no declarations of interests from Board members in relation to the substantive items on the agenda.

ITEM 5 – DIRECTOR’S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES **NMS (2023) 33**

5.1 The Director presented his report which had been circulated. Highlights included:

- Across our four museums in the first six months of 2023/24, NMS had welcomed 2.19 million visitors, 5% above forecast and 7% ahead of the same period last year.
- The installation of the Panmure Ewer and Basin in the *Art of Living* gallery after they were acquired for the nation under the Acceptance in Lieu scheme.
- The launch of the new National Strategy 2023-2027 on 24 October, which identifies two clear priorities for our national work: to share Scotland's collections and to support our sector.
- The touring exhibition *Audubon’s Birds of America* had completed a successful run from July-October at its first venue, Compton Verney Art Gallery in Warwickshire.

The Director also highlighted the recent launch of the NMS Annual Review 23: <https://www.nms.ac.uk/about-us/our-organisation/policies-and-reports/annual-review/>

5.2 Further to the last Board meeting, the Director reported on his attendance at the meeting of the Scottish Parliament’s Constitution, Europe, External Affairs & Culture Committee as part of its pre-budget scrutiny of the 2024/25 Scottish Government budget, and the latest sessions with other culture leaders and civil servants to progress the Scottish Government’s Public Sector Reform agenda.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT **NMS (2023) 34**

6.1 The Board noted the report which had been circulated.

ITEM 7 – BUDGET 2023/24

NMS (2023) 35

7.1 Keith Pentland presented the paper which had been circulated. He confirmed that:

- The 2023/24 budget had been updated since the last Board meeting to reflect the agreed costs of Pay Policy and the funding from Scottish Government.
- The Payroll section of the paper (section 4) has been amended to provide details of the pay award.
- Assumptions for Income and Costs had not changed since the draft paper was presented to the Board in March.
- The Scottish Government would be announcing its budget for 2024/25 on 19 December.

7.2 Following a brief discussion, the Board of Trustees:

- Approved the 2023/24 Budget.
- Noted the Financial Plan for 2024/25 and 2025/26.
- Welcomed the recent agreement of a 2-year pay deal with our recognised trade unions following the receipt of funding from Scottish Government.

ITEM 8 – ANNUAL REPORT & ACCOUNTS 2022/23

NMS (2023) 36

8.1 Keith Pentland presented the audited draft Annual Report & Accounts for 2022/23 which had been circulated. He explained that:

- They had been delayed for approval from the September Board meeting to allow for the clarification on the uncertainty of our funding for 2023/24, principally regarding Scottish Government funding for pay increases.
- The Report has been updated to reflect changes in Pages 1 and 12 from the version shared in September regarding the financial outlook and had been reviewed in detail by the Finance and Audit & Risk Committees.

8.2 The Board of Trustees approved the Annual Report & Accounts for 2022/23 and the sending of an appropriate letter of representation from the Accountable Officer to the auditors.

CB, KP

8.3 The Chairman congratulated Keith Pentland and the Finance team on all their hard work throughout the process, and thanked Jandy Stevenson and the Audit & Risk Committee for their support.

ITEM 9 – COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH REPORT

NMS (2023) 37

9.1 Trustees noted the Collections & Research Report.

ITEM 10 – SCOTLAND GALLERIES: PROGRESS REPORT

NMS (2023) 38

10.1 The Director introduced the circulated paper which provided a summary of progress made in planning for the renewal of the Scotland Galleries over the last 18 months. It also presented the organisation's vision through a shared Proposition Statement for the Scotland Galleries project and the plans for action for the next year.

10.2 There followed a wide-ranging discussion which included:

- The development of a Masterplan.
- Reflecting the audience voice in our plans.
- The importance of how we navigate visitors to and around the Scotland Galleries, telling powerful stories and making connections in the displays.
- Key staff appointments and expertise.
- The resourcing of such a major project.

10.3 The Board of Trustees:

- Noted the progress made;
- Endorsed the vision and Proposition Statement;
- Agreed next steps for the remainder of this financial year and 2024/25; and
- Asked for regular updates on progress.

CB

ITEM 11 – REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES

(i) Nominations & Governance Committee

11.1 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Nominations & Governance Committee meeting held on 27 September 2023 had been circulated.

11.2 The Chairman reported that a request had been submitted to Scottish Government to commence planning for the next Trustee recruitment round.

(ii) People & Remuneration Committee

11.3 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the People & Remuneration Committee meeting held on 11 October had been circulated.

11.4 Mary Bownes (Chair of the PARC Committee) gave a verbal update on the recent meeting held on 22 November 2023. The key element had been the Committee's positive and collegiate annual meeting with the trade unions.

(iii) Acquisitions Committee

11.5 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Acquisitions Committee meeting held on 24 October 2023 had been circulated.

11.6 Beth McKillop (Chair of the Acquisitions Committee) gave an overview of:

- The Committee's planned name change to 'Collections Development'; and
- The proposed revisions to its Terms of Reference for the approval of the Nominations & Governance Committee.

The revised Terms of Reference were approved by the Trustee members of the Nominations & Governance Committee who were all in attendance.

JB

(iv) Finance Committee

11.7 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of Finance Committee meeting held on 25 October 2023 had been circulated.

(v) Estates Committee

11.8 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Estates Committee meeting held on 01 November 2023 had been circulated.

(vi) National Museums Scotland Enterprises Ltd Board

11.9 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the NMS Enterprises Board meeting held on 17 November 2023 had been circulated.

11.10 Jandy Stevenson (Chair of the NMSE Ltd Board) reported that NMSE Ltd was ahead of budget and also highlighted the new NMSE events acceptance policy and process.

(vii) Audit & Risk Committee

11.11 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 20 November 2023 had been circulated.

11.12 Jandy Stevenson (Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee) reported that, further to the brief discussion at the last Board meeting on cyber security, the Committee was satisfied that this was checked regularly and a close eye being kept on it both internally and externally by NMS.

**ITEM 12 – APPOINTMENTS TO BOARD COMMITTEES
AND RELATED GROUPS**

NMS (2023) 39

12.1 The Board of Trustees:

- Endorsed the recommendations in the paper.
- Noted the attached appendix which details the associated, updated Trustee membership 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.

ITEM 13 – FORWARD PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

NMS (2023) 40

13.1 The Board noted the Forward Programme of Business.

ITEM 14 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 There was no other business.

ITEM 15 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

15.1 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 07 February 2024.