

BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE ROYAL ARMOURIES

SUMMARY OF THE 207th MEETING

HELD AT THE ROYAL ARMOURIES MUSEUM, LEEDS

ON THURSDAY 13th DECEMBER 2018

Present:

Hemant Patel (HP) – Chairman
Dr Andrew Burnett (AB)
General the Lord Houghton (NH)
Mr Neil Grant (NG)
Mr Paul Kirkman (PK)
Mr Jonathan Sands (JS)

In Attendance:

Dr Edward Impey (EI)
Mr Malcolm Duncan (MD)
Mr Frank Riley (FR)
Mr Rod Taylor (RT)
Mrs Laura Bell (LB)
Ms Siona Mackelworth (SM)
Ms Emma Carver (EC)
Mrs Kathryn Sibson - minutes

HP welcomed JS to his first meeting as a Trustee.

1. Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest were raised.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Chris Mayer, Sir Sebastian Roberts and Anne Curry.

3. Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed as a correct record.

4. Matters Arising

Multi-year Pay Deal

The DCMS confirmed that a multi-year pay deal was not possible.

All other matters arising are covered in the agenda.

5. Chairman's Report

HP explained he will remain a Trustee until July 2019 and Chairman until May 2019 and discussed his priorities over the coming months.

The Board of Trustees agreed with HP's proposals that AB becomes chairman of the Audit Committee, NG becomes chairman of the Finance & Capital Development Committee, and that JS becomes chairman of the RATE Board. Trustees accepted PK's offer to join the Finance & Capital Development Committee.

6. Director General / Executive Board Report

Corporate Plan

The last Corporate Plan had 10 Aims and these have been reduced down to three, higher level aims for the 2019-24 version. The objectives that sit underneath these will also be higher level. The three Aims mirror the 'pillars' in the Master's Plan and are about:

- Aim 1: sustainability
- Aim 2: prestige and positioning of RA
- Aim 3: public offer

EI confirmed that the whole Corporate Plan for 2019-24 will be presented to the Board of Trustees in March 2019 for approval but will be circulated in advance for comment. In addition, an Annual Operating Plan will be produced.

The list should not be prioritised, but it was agreed that the current Aim 3 should be moved to become Aim 1. EI agreed to circulate the new aims so Trustees can review and comment further outside of this meeting.

Action: EI

Brexit

The Head of EU Exit and International Policy at DCMS recently met with the Executive Board to discuss what would happen in a deal or no deal situation. The Executive Board will think about contingency plans.

Collections Department

RA has been asked to submit its museum accreditation return next year and has six months to do this.

DCMS is looking at options around shared solutions and RA has been part of the working group meeting to discuss items such as storage, sharing expertise and digital infrastructure.

Operations Department

FR has been looking after elements of the Operations Department. This is now coming to an end with RT transitioning back, although FR will continue to lead on special projects including risk, incident management, business continuity and ways to generate more income for the NFC.

The IT strategy is being picked up again and an audit of our current IT structure is currently underway. Aspects of the IT Strategy will be brought to the Finance & Capital Development Committee / Board of Trustees for the necessary approvals.

Finance Department

MD is starting to look at the budgets for 2019/20 and a multi-year forecast. This needs to be developed further to factor in various moving parts.

Public Engagement Department

HLF are to hold a stakeholder meeting in January 2019 to make a top line strategy announcement. Regional group sessions will also take place.

A brand consultant will be working with RA to look how the catering and conferencing business is positioned in terms of branding as well as other aspects of the commercial function. SM will speak to JS about this further.

Action: SM

Work has begun on a five year exhibition plan and the proposals will be brought to the Board of Trustees over the next few months.

A partnerships survey has recently been completed at the request of DCMS.

Culture Consortium Leeds

This year, RA is the chair of the Culture Consortium Leeds and the group is now reviewing its objectives Seventeen partner institutions are participating in an Economic Impact Assessment.

EC confirmed that RA are aware of the Leeds 2023 events programme being initiated by Leeds City Council.

7. Health & Safety

The Board of Trustees noted the report presented.

7.1 Health & Safety at Fort Nelson

An Action Plan has been produced to address issues and review working practices in the conservation workshops at Fort Nelson. The Board of Trustees confirmed it was content with the actions being taken.

8. Risk Management

As part of this year's internal audit programme, an audit of risk management was conducted. The list of recommendations resulting from this audit were discussed by the Audit Committee.

The Audit Committee conducted a thorough review of the Strategic Risk Register. It was noted that the number of risks on the Register was at the high end. The Committee advised that a number of risks should be removed as they were more managerial. Some risks were merged.

9. Highlight Object

LB presented the Rebel Alliance Star Wars blaster which was recently acquired as part of the Collecting Cultures project.

10. STRATEGIC ISSUES

10.1 Strategic Outline Case

The Board of Trustees reviewed the near final version of the Strategic Outline Case (SOC) that is intended to be submitted to the DCMS Finance Committee meeting in January 2019.

The Board of Trustees discussed whether it felt the options listed in the SOC were the right ones, and it was agreed they were.

The Board of Trustees gave its support for the Strategic Outline Case, the options and the general way ahead, to be presented to the DCMS Finance Committee in January 2019.

10.2 Fundraising

Corporate partnerships will have a standard set of benefits and anything additional to this will be negotiated on a project by project basis. An individual giving membership scheme is also due to be launched which will have very defined benefits.

10.3 Field of Cloth of Gold

This will be run as a public engagement project, not commercial, and will involve a number of different activities in 2020.

SM invited recommendations for the titling of the programme.

Action: All

The Board of Trustees confirmed it was happy for the project to proceed as outlined, noting the expected net overall cost.

11. COMMITTEE UPDATES

11.1 Audit

Fort Nelson and the Strategic Risk Register were the main items covered during the Audit Committee meeting. Other items discussed included the plan for dealing with the outstanding audit recommendations and the requirements from DCMS around the new Counter Fraud Standard. Proposals for the 2018/19 audit were presented by the NAO.

11.2 Finance & Capital Development Committee

The Committee discussed the Masterplan and the Field of Cloth of Gold. The 2018/19 forecast was reviewed and the extra costs and income noted. The proposed five year spend plan around the additional MICE income was also discussed. The Committee requested some amendments including an additional contingency allocation and visitor numbers aligned with public engagement spend.

11.3 RATE Board

RATE is expected to make a substantial contribution to RA this financial year, excluding RAI income. A number of staffing changes have occurred recently within retail in Leeds and catering at Fort Nelson.

The contract for RATE's brand licensing agent has been extended by a further year.

The limited edition I.33 sword has sold well over the Christmas period.

12. GOVERNANCE

12.1 2018/19 Forecast

In broad terms, the underlying budget is slightly over spent. Attempts have been made to off-set and balance this back by finding savings across the organisation and deferring some spend to 2019/20.

The 2019/20 budget will be presented in March 2019 to the Board of Trustees however, earlier drafts will be circulated to the Finance & Capital Development Committee for scrutiny and comment.

HP explained that there is a dilemma facing the organisation as, although there is more income, there are increasing costs and a long list of projects to be completed. The Executive Board has been asked to work through a prioritisation process for spending this additional income, whilst also building up the Reserves figure. Visitor numbers will also be integrated in to the forward planning.

12.2 Loan Report

The Board of Trustees approved the short-term loan request from Bendigo Art Gallery in Australia, and the long-term loan request from West Berkshire County Council which will be reviewed on a three yearly basis. LB confirmed that the Collections Department will ensure the items are displayed in the correct cases and conditions.

The Board of Trustees noted the approval by HP, outside of a formal meeting, of a short-term loan to the National Army Museum which was received at short notice.

12.3 Forthcoming Events

The Board of Trustees noted the forthcoming events.

12.4 Forward Agenda Plan

Trustees noted the forward agenda plan.

13. Any Other Business

No further items were raised for discussion.

The next meeting will be held on Thursday 28 March 2019 at the Royal Armouries Museum, Leeds, commencing 11am.