



## Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Minutes of Meeting of the Board on Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2019,  
Board Room, Collections Resource Centre.

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<b>Present:</b>	Mr. John Bowen Ms. Mary Crotty Professor Ingrid Hook Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty Dr Linda King Mr. Ambrose Loughlin (alternate Chair) Ms. Judith McCarthy	Ms. Denise Moroney Mr. Declan Nelson Professor Mary O'Dowd Dr. Andrew Power Ms Helen Shenton Ms. Virginia Teehan Mr Paolo Viscardi
<b>Apologies:</b>	Ms. Catherine Heaney	Mr. Aidan Walsh
<b>In attendance:</b>	Ms Lynn Scarff (Director, NMI) Ms Jennifer Keane (Secretary to Board, NMI)	Ms Maria Kearns (Head of HR, NMI)

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### **1. Opening of the meeting, apologies, if any, adoption of the agenda**

Mr Loughlin opened the meeting and conveyed apologies from Ms Heaney and Mr Walsh.

As the Chair could not attend, it was agreed that Mr Loughlin would chair the meeting as alternate.

The Board adopted the agenda.

Mr Loughlin reported that Ms Virginia Teehan has stepped down from the Board, as she has recently taken up the post of CEO of the Heritage Council. The Board agreed a vote of thanks for Ms Teehan for her great service to the Board and to the sub-committees of the Board.

The Board congratulated Prof James-Chakraborty on her recent Gold Medal award from the Royal Irish Academy.

### **2. Minutes of the meeting of 17 January 2019 and matters arising**

The Board reviewed the minutes of the meeting of the 17 January 2019. The minutes were proposed by Mr Bowen, seconded by Mr Nelson and were agreed subject to two minor amendments. **The Secretary agreed to make the changes.**

### **3. Executive Report from the Chair and the Director**

The Board noted the executive report from the Chair and the Director.

#### **Update on national programmes connected to DCHG**

The Director reported that the Decade of Centenaries Local Authority Forum organised by the DCHG took place in the Palatine Room at Collins Barracks yesterday. Assistant Secretary, Conor Falvey, Dr Martin Manning and Dr Martin Mansergh addressed the forum.



The Director reported that she had given a presentation to the Forum which outlined the NMI response to the Decade of Centenaries to date and gave an overview of future plans.

The Director reported that she has had initial conversations with the Head of Collections at National Museums Northern Ireland (NMNI) in relation to establishing a Memorandum of Understanding between NMNI and NMI. The Director stated that a meeting with the Director of NMNI is being set up to discuss this matter in more detail.

**The Director agreed to update GPAC on the matter at their next meeting.**

The Director reported on the following events:

**Memorandum of Understanding with the National Museum Wales and St David's Day reception**

The Director reported that as part of the Memorandum of Understanding the NMI team will visit the NMW in the coming months.

**Alison Lowry – (A) Dressing Our Hidden Truths**

In advance of the public launch on 26 March, there will be a special private event on 25 March for survivors of institutions such as the Mother and Baby homes and Magdalene Laundries. The Director reported that consultant, Edel Hackett, has been engaged to work on this launch.

The Director and Ms Kearns reported that training for staff on the themes addressed by this exhibition was held on 11 March and was very well attended.

**The Pride Block Party (In association with Dublin LGBTQ+ Pride)**

The Director reported that the NMI has been working with Mr Brian Crowley to develop a LGBTQI+ tour, which will run in the weeks after the Pride Festival.

**Website**

The Director reported that the Head of ICT, Mr Olivier Kazmierczak, will leave the NMI to commence a new role at the end of March. The Board extended good wishes to Mr Kazmierczak for his new role. The Director reported that Ms Kearns is working with Mr Kazmierczak to recruit a contractor to temporarily manage the day-to-day running of the ICT department, until sanction to recruit a replacement Head of ICT is secured. The Director reported that the ICT department have decided to undertake two more rounds of user testing with a website company. The new website will be launched in September 2019.

**Visitor numbers**

The Director reported that visitor numbers are up 6%. The Board agreed that it is encouraging to see the rise in visitor numbers. The Board discussed signage at NMI and agreed that the review of signage that is taking place is very important, as there is a need for more coherent signage and branding.

4. **Report from Board Committees**

*a) HR Committee*

Ms Kearns provided an update to the Board on current cases.



Ms Kearns reported that the policies that were pending, have been approved.

**The Board agreed that it is crucial to have the Whistleblowing and Children and Vulnerable Adults policies approved as soon as possible.**

The Board commended the Executive for the progress that has been made over the two year period in relation to HR.

The Board discussed legal advice in relation to a current case.

***b) Development and Strategy Committee***

Mr Bowen delivered the report from the Development and Strategy Committee.

Mr Bowen reported that one of the key issues discussed at the Committee was physical maintenance issues. The Director reported that the OPW have launched a tender for a contractor to carry out investigative works on the Rotunda roof at Kildare Street.

**Collections Resource Centre**

Mr Bowen stated that the NMI is continuing to liaise with the OPW on collections storage arrangements.

**The Board agreed that progress on this urgent matter is very slow and needs to be prioritised by all parties.**

***c) GPAC***

Prof James-Chakraborty presented the report from the GPAC Committee.

Prof James-Chakraborty reported that the Committee had a very positive meeting with Mr Michael McDonagh, Chief Archaeologist at the National Monuments Service in relation to the public consultation on the Heritage Ireland 2030. **Prof James-Chakraborty encouraged all Board members to make a submission in relation to the policy proposal.**

Prof James Chakraborty reported that the Committee had a presentation from the Keeper of Irish Antiquities, Ms Maeve Sikora in relation to proposed changes to the National Monuments Bill. Under the proposed changes, the updated Bill would refer to the Board instead of the Director. Prof James-Chakraborty commended Ms Sikora for her work on this.

Prof James-Chakraborty reported that as Ms Teehan has stepped down, Mr Bowen has agreed to join GPAC as the representative for Munster.

***d) Strategic Plan Committee***

Mr Loughlin reported to the Board that as Ms Teehan has stepped down from the Board, Ms Heaney will chair the HR Committee and has stepped down from the Strategic Plan Committee. Ms McCarthy has agreed to chair the Strategic Plan Committee.

Ms McCarthy presented the report from the Strategic Plan Committee.



Ms McCarthy reported that the draft 2019 Business Plan was discussed with the Director and then sent out to the Strategic Plan Committee for comment and is now before the Board for consideration.

**The Board approved the Business Plan for 2019.**

*e) Audit and Risk Committee*

Mr Loughlin presented an update to the Board from the Audit and Risk Committee.

**Oversight Agreement**

The Board agreed the Oversight Agreement for 2019, subject to changes suggested by the Audit and Risk Committee.

**Change of Bank Account**

Mr Loughlin reported that as the Paymaster General has changed to Danske Bank, so the vote account of the NMI has to be changed to Danske Bank also.

**The Board accepted the resolution to change the vote account and Mr Loughlin signed the resolution on behalf of the Chair of the Board.**

**5. Date and venue of next meeting**

The next meeting of the Board will take place on **Thursday 16 May 2019 at 10am in the Palatine Room at Collins Barracks.**