



Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Minutes of Meeting of the Board on Thursday 17th November, at 9.30am,
National Museum of Ireland – Country Life, Co. Mayo.

Present:	Ms. Catherine Heaney (Chair) Mr. John Bowen Ms. Mary Crotty Professor Ingrid Hook Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty (via conference call) Mr. Ambrose Loughlin Ms. Judith McCarthy Ms. Denise Moroney	Mr. Declan Nelson Professor Mary O’Dowd Ms. Lynn Scarff Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh Dr. Andrew Power Ms. Virginia Teehan Mr. Aidan Walsh Ms. Karen Wilson (via conference call)
Apologies:	n/a	
In attendance:	Mr Ragnall Ó Floinn (Director, NMI) Mr Seamus Lynam (Head of Operations, NMI, Items 3 & 4 only)	Mr Stephen O’Kelly, (Contract Finance Officer, Item 4a only) Ms Jennifer O’Mahony (Secretary to Board, NMI)

Mr Peter Osborne of McCann Fitzgerald delivered a presentation to the Board on Corporate Governance.

The Chair and all the Board members thanked Mr Osborne for his very interesting presentation.

1. **Opening of meeting, apologies if any, minutes of the meeting of 15th September 2016 and 3rd October 2016 and matters arising**

The Chair opened the meeting. The Chair noted that there were no apologies.

The minutes of the meeting of the 15th September 2016 were proposed by Dr Andrew Power and seconded by Prof. Ingrid Hook.

The minutes of the meeting of 3rd October 2016 were proposed Prof. Kathleen James-Chakraborty and seconded by Ms Denise Moroney subject to a change of wording in the first paragraph.

Matters Arising

All matters arising will be considered under items on the agenda.



2. Executive report by Director

The Chair invited the Director to update the Board on executive matters.

a) Update on the Budget Allocation for 2017

The Board discussed a letter sent to the Chair of the Board and the Director from Minister Humphreys on 28 October 2017 confirming the Museum's budget allocation for 2017. There has been an increase of €150k in the capital allocation. The pay allocation is up by €350k, the minimum amount requested by the Director in the estimates to fund positions that were agreed under the staff restructuring plan.

The Board noted that the 'significant gesture' specified in the letter of the Chair to the Minister of 28 September 2016 and 6 October 2016 was not included.

The Board agreed that the Masterplan and the associated staffing plan could form a basis to develop the business case to support the estimates statement to be sent to the Department in future years.

The Board agreed that the estimates statement for 2018 should be submitted to the Board in advance of the Board meeting in July 2017 and approved by the Board before they are submitted to the Department in September 2017.

1916 Legacy Project

The Chair reported that she had attended a meeting at the National Gallery which had been called by Minister Humphreys with all of the Chairs and Directors of the National Cultural Institutions. At the meeting, the Minister announced that in the coming years, some funding will be available to fund 1916 Legacy Projects. The Chair reported that following the meeting she had spoken with Minister Humphreys about the Museum's Masterplan and vision for the coming years and the Minister responded very positively.

b) Wellbeing Survey

The Director reported that Professor Robert Kerr of the University of Ulster had presented the results of the Wellbeing Survey to all staff on Wednesday 26th October at the Dublin sites and Thursday 27th October at Turlough Park. The Director and the Board agreed that the results of the survey are very concerning. The Director stated that some measures had been put in place to address the issues raised by the survey and that the support of the Board in this important area would be very welcome.

c) Approval of the Dignity at Work Policy

The Director submitted the Dignity at Work policy to the Board for approval. The Director stated that the policy has been agreed with the relevant staff associations. The Dignity at Work policy was approved by the Board.

d) Approval of the Irish Language Scheme

The Director submitted the Irish Language Scheme to the Board for approval. The Board agreed that it is very important that at the first point of contact, the service can be delivered through Irish.



The Board acknowledged the lack of resources at the Museum but expressed confidence that the targets set out in the scheme are achievable. The Irish Language Scheme was proposed by Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh and seconded by the Chair.

e) The Ceramics Room

The Board discussed the decision taken by government that the Seanad will occupy the Ceramics Room at Kildare Street on a temporary basis until January 2019. The Chair reported that on Thursday 10th November she met with staff before the Ceann Comhairle, representatives of the Houses of the Oireachtas and the OPW joined the meeting in the Ceramics Room to discuss the issue. The Chair reported that the Ceann Comhairle had confirmed that the decision to re-locate the Seanad to the Ceramics Room had been taken in January 2016 and had also given assurances that a letter will follow shortly from the Houses of the Oireachtas outlining the terms of the agreement between the two institutions. The memorandum of understanding between the Houses of the Oireachtas and the Museum will outline the nature of the works, the timetable for the works, planning permission and the date that the building is to be returned to the Museum in January 2019. It was agreed that the Board had not made a decision to alienate a section of its premises and the Board's role in this matter was to deal with a decision that had already been reached and try to mitigate the consequences to the benefit of the Museum. The Board agreed that it should be made clear that the arrangement is temporary.

The Board discussed the letter from Mr Peter Finnegan, Clerk of Dáil Eireann of 15 November 2016. The Board agreed that it would be beneficial to the Museum to continue to meet with the Houses of the Oireachtas and the OPW on a regular basis. It was agreed that the level of meetings could be reduced at this stage but engagement should be continued.

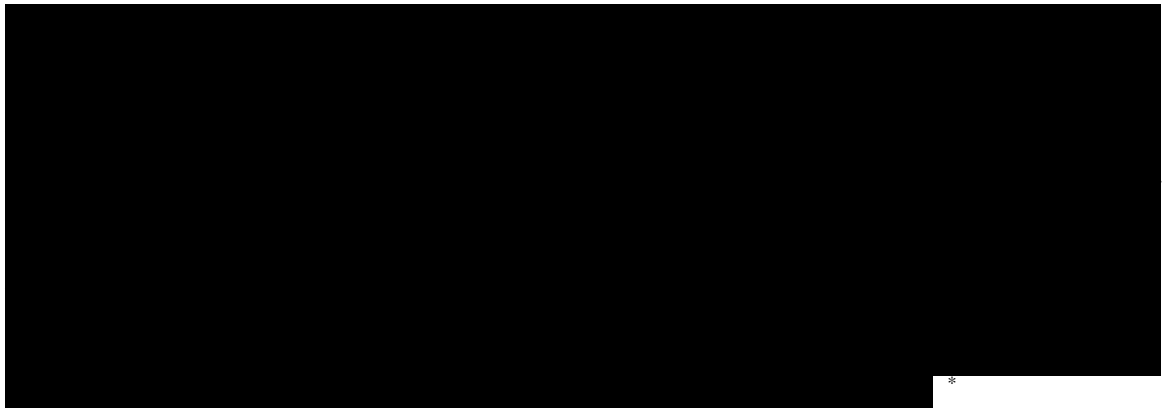
The Board agreed that the letter from Mr Finnegan of 15th November and the response from the Board (once it has been drafted and sent) should be circulated to all Museum staff members.

3. Key discussion item: The Collections Resource Centre at Swords

Mr Lynam joined the meeting.

Mr Lynam gave a presentation to the Board on the background and the current use of the Collections Resource Centre at Swords. Mr Lynam outlined the various storage facilities that the Museum holds around the country including: Beggars Bush (Dublin), the former Industrial School at Daingean (Co. Offaly) and Lanesborough (Co. Longford). Mr Lynam reported to the Board that in 2007, the Comptroller and Auditor General had compiled a report on the storage and access of the collections at the Museum. The report found that the collections were stored in unsuitable conditions and the collections were not accessible to the public. The situation regarding the very poor storage and access to the Collections had been brought to the attention of Government for decades and the C&AG's report was welcomed by the Museum, as it supported its case for serious improvements.

Following this report, the Museum established the Inventory Project, which aimed to catalogue the Museum's collections over a five year period. The Museum explored a number of options with the OPW to provide better facilities in order to improve the storage and access to the collections.



The Secretary will circulate a copy of this presentation to all Board members.

It was agreed that the Chair would write to the Minister about this issue.

4. **Report to the Board from the Committees**

Mr O’Kelly joined the meeting

Audit & Risk Committee update

The Chair of the Audit and Risk committee briefed the Board on the position of the Financial Statements for 2015, highlighting two key points that the committee are concerned about:

1) The State Claims Agency issue

The Chair of the Audit and Risk committee reported to the Board that historically, claims relating to public liability and employer liability were paid by the State. In the 2014 accounts, the Board had taken the view that the provision should be made within ‘Receivables’.



* Redacted due to commercial sensitivity or data protection.

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The Audit and Risk committee recommended to the Board that the Financial Statements for 2015 should be adopted. The Board agreed.

Development and Strategy Committee Update

The Chair of the Development and Strategy Committee updated the Board on the committee's activities and reported that the Committee had met with Jura Consultants to discuss the Masterplan on 9th November. The Committee will continue to liaise closely with Jura and the executive on the development of the plan.

5. Establish the structure for the CEO annual review and goal setting

The Director and the Secretary left the room while this item was discussed by the Board.

The Board established a committee to put in place a system of performance review for the role of Director, begin the process for selection and recruitment of a successor to the current Director, and other process reviews as necessary.

Four Board members were appointed to the committee:

Dr Andrew Power (Chair)
Ms. Denise Moroney
Ms. Mary Crotty
Ms Virginia Teehan

The Board decided that one external member would also be appointed to the committee.

6. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Board will take place on **Thursday 19th January 2017 at 10am at the National Museum of Ireland – Archaeology, Kildare Street.**