



Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Minutes of Meeting of the Board on Thursday 16th May 2019,
Palatine Room, National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks.

Present:	Ms. Catherine Heaney (Chair) Ms. Mary Crotty Professor Ingrid Hook Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty Dr Linda King Mr. Ambrose Loughlin	Ms. Denise Moroney Mr. Declan Nelson Professor Mary O'Dowd Dr. Andrew Power Ms Helen Shenton Mr Paolo Viscardi
Apologies:	Mr. John Bowen	Ms. Judith McCarthy Ms. Virginia Teehan
In attendance:	Ms Lynn Scarff (Director, NMI) Ms Jennifer Keane (Secretary to Board, NMI) Ms Aoife McBride (Corporate Affairs Manager)	Ms Maria Kearns (Head of HR, NMI) (Item 5 only) Dr Audrey Whitty (Head of Collections & Learning, NMI) (Item 5 only)

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

The Chair opened the meeting and conveyed apologies from Ms McCarthy and Mr Bowen.

The Board adopted the agenda.

The Chair reported that Mr Aidan Walsh has stepped down from the Board. The Board agreed a vote of thanks for Mr Walsh for his great service to the Board and to the sub-committees of the Board, particularly in relation to the Strategy and the Masterplanning process.

The Chair reported that Dr Audrey Whitty has been appointed as Head of Collections and Learning. The Board agreed that this is a very positive development and extended best wishes to Dr Whitty in her new role.

The Chair reported that following on from feedback from the Board review in December some changes have been made to the way in which the Board meeting and reports to the Board are structured.

It was agreed that time will be allocated at each meeting for a special discussion item or to hear from the NMI staff on particular issues and if the Chairs of the Committee would like to suggest a special discussion item for the Board meeting, they should contact the Chair of the Board and the Director at least two weeks in advance of the meeting.

The Chair thanked Mr Loughlin for chairing the last meeting.

The Board agreed the agenda.



2. Minutes of the meeting of 14 March 2019 and matters arising

The Board reviewed the minutes of the meeting of the 14 March 2019. The minutes were proposed by Dr Power seconded by Ms Moroney.

3. Executive Report from the Chair and the Director

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

Engagement with the Department

The Chair of the Board informed the Board that she sent correspondence to Minister Madigan and the Department's senior officials to update them on current matters at NMI. The Chair reported that she and the Director met Minister Madigan at the launch of the Strategic Plan 2019-2022 on 4 April.

The Chair of the Board reported that she and the Director also met with the Assistant Secretary, Mr Conor Falvey on 2 May to discuss HR matters, the budget and the Oversight Agreement. The requirement for the Board to conduct an external review every three years, and the Department's role in assisting NMI in this external review was also discussed.

Mr Falvey informed the Chair and the Director that he would be happy to meet with the NMI Board in the near future. The Chair informed the Board that Minister Madigan would also be available to meet the Board later this year.

Board Review

The Chair of the Board reported that a tender was issued for quotes for the external Board review. The Board gave leave to the Chair and the Director to appoint an external reviewer; based on the agreed assessment criteria.

Commercial Activities

The Director updated the Board on a recent filming activity in the museum and the identification of a need for updated policies in this area. **The Board gave leave to the Chair of the Board and the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee to work with the Director on policies in this area. It was agreed that an updated NMI Filming Policy should be sent to the Audit and Risk Committee for review at the next meeting.**

Health and Safety at the NMI, Kildare Street and Merrion Street

The Board received an update on a state claims agency case relating to a fall at the National Museum of Ireland in 2016.

It was agreed that an updated compendium of cases being managed by the State Claims Agency on behalf of NMI should be provided to the Audit and Risk Committee at their next meeting.

It was agreed that the Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee will write to the OPW to request a report on Health and Safety at the National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street and the Natural History Museum.



The Board discussed matters arising from the Executive Report:

Pride event at NMI, Collins Barracks

The Director reported on the arrangement for the Pride event at Collins Barracks.

The Board approved the closure of the NMI, Collins Barracks on 29th June from 2pm to facilitate the event.

Visitor Numbers

The Board noted the rise in visitor numbers and thanked the Director and the NMI team for their work on this over the last number of months. The Director thanked the Board and reported that the next step is to conduct audience research to better understand the motivations of NMI visitors.

Inventory Project

The Director reported that final agreements are in place to enable this project to move forward. .

Ireland in Focus: Photographing the 1950s

The Director reported that there have been some unforeseen delays in relation to this exhibition.

The Director reported that the exhibition is planned for October/November 2019.

International Year of the Salmon

The Board noted the photo call with Minister Canney on the 16th June at the Natural History Museum to mark the International Year of the Salmon.

4. Special Discussion Item

The Director delivered a presentation on the key areas of focus for the NMI budget for 2020. The Director stated that the budget is thematically based and aligned with the Strategic Plan 2019-2022. The Board thanked the Director for her presentation.

It was agreed that the detailed Budget for 2020 will be reviewed and approved at the July meeting.

5. Report from Board Committees

Dr Audrey Whitty and Ms. Maria Kearns joined the meeting. The Board welcomed Dr Whitty to the meeting as Head of Collections and Learning and wished her well in her new role.

All the reports from the Committees were taken as read.

a) *HR Committee*

The Board received an update on all current HR matters.

The Chair reported that the Director Annual Review and Probation Review will take place on 21 May.

Ms Kearns confirmed that the Head of Finance & Procurement interviews will take place during the first week in June.



The Board discussed the corporate governance training provided by the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and delivered by Navigo training.

It was agreed that Navigo will be asked to share the feedback with any members who took part in the training and then any additional feedback to be provided to Navigo.

b) Development and Strategy Committee

Ms Crotty delivered the report from the Development and Strategy Committee.

The Director outlined the proposal from the OPW on phased development works to the Kildare Street building.

The Board agreed that the plans look very positive but noted the risk to the collections and the need for detailed analyses on this basis.

The Board discussed the Collections Resource Centre.

The Board noted that Retail revenue is up and extended thanks to the Retail team for this progress but noted that the costs of retail function is high in relation to sales.

It was agreed that this matter will be discussed in more detail by the Development and Strategy Committee at the next meeting.

c) Audit and Risk Committee

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

Mr Loughlin reported that the Committee had written to the C&AG to request an earlier start date for the external audit and the audit will now begin in June, so the Financial Statements 2018 should be ready for the Board to review at the next meeting in July.

Mr Loughlin reported that at the next meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee, the Executive will deliver a presentation on collection loans.

Mr Loughlin reported that the outturn report shows expenditure at 28%, with 33% of the year gone.

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d) GPAC

The Board noted the report from the GPAC Committee.

e) Strategic Plan Committee

The Director reported that she had met with Ms. McCarthy this week to discuss progress on the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2019-2022.

6. Date and venue of next meeting

The Board agreed the change of date for the next meeting. It was agreed that the July meeting will take place on **Thursday 18 July and Friday 19 July 2019 in the Board Room at the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life at Turlough Park.**