



## Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of the Board on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> October, at 9am,  
National Museum of Ireland, Collins Barracks

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<b>Present:</b>	Ms. Catherine Heaney (Chair) Mr. John Bowen Ms. Mary Crotty Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty (by phone) Mr. Ambrose Loughlin (by phone)	Ms. Judith McCarthy (by phone) Ms. Denise Moroney Ms. Lynn Scarff Ms. Karen Wilson (by phone)
<b>Apologies:</b>	Professor Ingrid Hook Professor Mary O’Dowd	Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh
<b>Did not receive notification of the meeting:</b>	Dr. Andrew Power  Mr. Declan Nelson	Ms. Virginia Teehan  Mr. Aidan Walsh
<b>In attendance:</b>	Mr Ragnall Ó Floinn (Director, NMI) Mr Seamus Lynam (Head of Operations, NMI, Item 4 only)	Jennifer O’Mahony (Secretary to the Board, NMI)

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### 1. **Opening of meeting, apologies**

The Chair opened the meeting. The Secretary conveyed apologies on behalf of Professor Ingrid Hook, Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh and Professor Mary O’Dowd. Due to a communications error, Mr. Declan Nelson, Ms. Virginia Teehan, Mr. Aidan Walsh and Dr. Andrew Power did not receive notification of the meeting in time to attend.

### 2. **Update from the Chair on meetings regarding the Ceramics Room**

The Chair reported that on 22<sup>nd</sup> September and 27<sup>th</sup> September, she and the Director had met with the Ceann Comhairle, Seán Ó Fearghaíl, Leas-Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann, Paul Coghlan and Peter Finnegan, Clerk of the Dáil and Secretary General in the Ceramics Room at the Museum in Kildare Street. The Chair stated that she had raised the challenges currently facing the Museum around budget and staffing.

The Chair reported that the possibility that the Ceramics Room might be available for the Museum to use on days when the Seanad is not sitting had been discussed at the meeting and the Ceann Comhairle is keen to investigate whether this would be feasible.



The Chair reported that the possibility of the installation of a lift had been discussed at the meeting. The OPW are still not certain whether this would be feasible. According to the current schedule, work to convert the Ceramics Room would need to be completed by 5<sup>th</sup> December.

The Chair reported that the Ceann Comhairle is willing to come to the Museum to meet with staff and answer any questions that they might have on the proposed works. The Board agreed that this would be very positive.

### **3. Project Manager**

On behalf of the executive, Mr Lynam advised the Board that from an operational point of view it would be desirable to hire an independent contractor for a period of four months to ensure that service to the public at the Kildare Street site is not disrupted and to represent the Museum's interests during all exploratory works, fit-out and dismantling phases of the project. The Board agreed that if possible the contract should have experience of architectural conservation projects Mr Lynam requested the Board's permission to begin to recruit such a person and the Board agreed.

#### Working group on the Executive side

The Board suggested that a working group be set up on the executive side which could liaise with senior management around practical issues relating to the proposed move.

### **4. Appointment of a temporary committee of the Board to liaise with all relevant stakeholders on the Ceramics Room Project**

The Board agreed that a committee should be established that would be discharged to make necessary decisions outside of Board meetings, as this is a moving issue and requires decisiveness and flexibility which is not possible within the structure of the Board.

The members of the new committee are:

Chair – Ms Catherine Heaney

Representative of Audit and Risk Committee – Mr John Bowen

Representative of the Development and Strategy Committee – Ms Lynn Scarff

Representative of the GPAC Committee – Ms Karen Wilson

### **5. Letters to be issued by the Chair on behalf of the Board**

It was agreed that the Chair would issue a letter to the Ceann Comhairle on behalf of the Board outlining the outcome of the Board meeting today and inviting the Ceann Comhairle, Seanad Cathaoirleach and Leas-Chathaoirleach, and the Government Chief Whip to take a tour of the Museum at Kildare Street.

It was agreed that the Chair would also issue letters on behalf of the Board to Minister Heather Humphreys, Minister Paschal Donohoe, Minister Michael Noonan, outlining the Museum's current budget and staffing situation, emphasising the considerable negative impact that the proposed works will have on the Museum's operations and requesting a 'significant gesture' distinct from additional salary provisions that have been sought since 2014 or any enabling works to be undertaken on the building by the OPW in conjunction with the temporary housing of the Seanad.



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

The next meeting of the Board will take place on **Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2016 at 10am at the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life, Castlebar, Co. Mayo.**