



Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Minutes of Meeting of the Board on Thursday 14th September 2017 at 10am,
National Museum of Ireland – Decorative Arts and History, Collins Barracks.

Present:	Ms. Catherine Heaney (Chair) Ms. Mary Crotty Professor Ingrid Hook Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty (by phone until 11am) Mr. Ambrose Loughlin (until 11.30am) Ms. Denise Moroney Mr. Declan Nelson	Professor Mary O’Dowd Professor Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh Ms. Lynn Scarff (until 11.30am) Dr. Andrew Power Ms. Virginia Teehan Mr. Aidan Walsh Ms. Karen Wilson
Apologies:	Mr. John Bowen	Ms. Judith McCarthy
In attendance:	Mr Ragnall Ó Floinn (Director, NMI) Ms Jennifer O’Mahony (Secretary to Board, NMI)	Mr Rolly Read, (Head of Collections, NMI)

1. Opening of the meeting, apologies, if any, adoption of the agenda, minutes of the meeting of 13 July and the EGM of 21 July 2017 and matters arising

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

Mr Ambrose Loughlin and Ms Lynn Scarff recorded that they needed to leave the meeting at 11.30am.

The Board requested that the minutes of the 15 July be amended to reflect the lengthy discussion that had taken place on the manner of the presentation of the Budget Estimates for 2018 and that the Board had not had an adequate opportunity to scrutinise the report. As a result of this, an EGM was required which was held on 21 July. The Chair stressed the importance of receiving information on a timely basis. The Secretary agreed to make this change.

The adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 13 July 2017 was proposed by A. Power and seconded by L. Scarff subject to the amendment recorded.

Ms Moroney stated that she did not attend the meeting as stated in the minutes of 21 July and the minutes will be amended accordingly.

The adoption of the minutes of the meeting of 21 July 2017 was proposed by D. Nelson and seconded by V. Teehan, subject to the amendment recorded.

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Matters Arising

The Board noted the resignation of the staff representative Ms Karen Wilson. The Board thanked Ms Wilson for her valuable contribution and expressed appreciation for her service. Ms Wilson thanked the Board and extended best wishes to the Board for their future work. The Chair noted that the process of notifying the Minister of Ms Wilson's departure has already commenced.

The Board noted that the photographs and biogs of Board members had not yet been published on the Musuem's website and asked the Secretary to follow up on this point. The Secretary agreed.

The Secretary agreed to circulate the link to Museum's webpage where the Board minutes are published.

2. Executive Report by the Chair and the Director

The Board agreed that the Executive Report should be taken as read. The Chair reported that following the July Board meeting, she had written to Minister Humphreys (document 2 in Board pack, 26 July). The Chair reported that she had met with Feargal Ó Cóighligh, Assistant Secretary and discussed the Masterplan in relation to the Government's ten year capital development programme. The outlook from the Department at this point is quite positive. The Chair reported that she continues to have ongoing contact with the Secretary General in relation to HR issues at the Museum.

The Director reported that he wrote to the Secretary General regarding the issue of delegated sanction on 1 September. The Director reported that the Inventory Project has now reached an impasse as the Department will not allow the use of capital monies for the project. Senior Management will be meeting the Department over the coming weeks and will try to progress the matter.



The Board asked for an update on matters to be resolved regarding the Oversight Agreement. **The Secretary will follow up on this.**

The Board noted the National Treasures project involving RTÉ and the National Museum of Ireland – Country Life with interest.

The Board noted the occasion of the 20th Anniversary of Collins Barracks, attended by President Michael D. Higgins and thanked all staff involved in organising the event.

The Director suggested that President Michael D. Higgins be invited to open the exhibition on Traveller Culture 'Freeborn' which will open in the Museum of Country Life in June 2018. **The Board agreed to this suggestion.**

*Redacted due to commercial sensitivity/data protection.



3. Report from Board Committees

a) Audit & Risk Committee update

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

Financial Statements 2016: Mr Loughlin reported that the statements for 2016 are almost finalised. The State Claims liabilities remain an issue and obtaining exact figures from the State Claims Agency (SCA) is quite slow. When available, these figures are to be forwarded to the Department. The committee will continue discussions with the Department and the SCA to seek a resolution to the matter. The Committee advised that it is vital that each of the Museum sites undergo a thorough risk assessment as agreed by the Board at the July meeting.

The Committee proposed that the Financial Statements for 2016 be approved subject to amendment regarding Board attendance and the finalisation of note 19 and that the Chair and Mr Loughlin should sign the accounts on behalf of the Board. This was proposed by Mr Walsh and seconded by Ms Teehan.

Finance Pack: The Board noted the finance report that had been prepared by the Executive up to end of August 2017. In general expenditure is well controlled. The Board noted that the Department have provided €230k in additional capital funding: €80k to fund a Discovery Zone at the Natural History Museum, €100k for new exhibition cases and €50k for storage furniture for the natural history collections in Swords. €150k has also been provided by the Department to acquire objects for the national collections from the Yeats auction. The Director mentioned that he and Dr Jennifer Goff are examining the possible acquisition of an archive associated with Eileen Gray. **The Board agreed that this archive would be an excellent addition to the current Eileen Gray collection at Collins Barracks.**

The Board suggested that a case be made to the Department for an annual acquisitions grant rather than applications for funding being made every time the Museum wishes to acquire an object. It was agreed that this matter would be discussed by the GPAC committee in the context of the new acquisitions policy which is currently being prepared by the Collections and Learning Department.

Audit on Data Protection in the Museum: The Audit and Risk Committee suggested that as the Museum is entering a period of public consultation in relation to the Masterplan, it might be an opportune time to examine how data is retained and stored in the Museum, especially in the context of GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) which will come into force on 25 May 2018. **The Board agreed that the Audit and Risk Committee should request that Mazars carry out an audit on data stored in the Museum.**

b) Development and Strategy Committee update

Ms Lynn Scarff presented an update to the Board from the Development and Strategy Committee.

Ms Scarff thanked all Board members for their contribution to the Masterplan process. The latest version (dated 23 August) had been circulated to Board members. Ms Scarff reported that Q4 PR have been engaged to work with the Museum to arrange the public consultation phase and the launch of the Masterplan.

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The Board agreed the following:

- Q4 will produce a timeline of key milestones from the present to the launch of the Masterplan in January/February 2018.
- A meeting between the Department, the OPW and the Museum Board and Executive to discuss the Masterplan will be set up as soon as possible.
- Mr Nigel Monaghan, Keeper of Natural History will act as coordinator for this stage of the Masterplan process, liaising with the Board, the Executive, the Department, OPW, Q4 and all other key stakeholders.
- A tender for the design and editing of a short public document should be issued by Friday 22 September. This document will need to be completed in advance of the public consultation phase, beginning Monday 6 November.
- The launch of the public consultation phase of the Masterplan will take place during the week of the 6 November 2017. Minister Humphreys will be invited to launch the public consultation phase at Collins Barracks.
- On 5 October 2017, a meeting will be held with the Development and Strategy Committee, a representative of the GPAC Committee, any other Board members that wish to attend, Q4 PR and representatives of Museum management to discuss the public consultation plan. At this meeting the following will be decided:
 - i. Three to five keys questions which will be included in the public consultation
 - ii. Audience mapping: who should be consulted during the process and at which locations?

Following the meeting of the 5 October, a list of stakeholders for public consultation will be circulated to the Board so that if the Board members wish to include any other stakeholders, they can do so that point.

The Board unanimously approved the Masterplan consultation document subject to any minor corrections that may need to be made. It was agreed that Board members should send any minor errors/corrections to Ms Scarff (cc. Mr Ó Floinn and Ms O'Mahony) by noon on Tuesday 19 September.

The Board discussed the Introduction Brief for National Museum of Ireland Masterplan that was circulated with the Board papers (Item 3 b) iii). The Board approved the general content and approach and the key elements of the statement, it was agreed that feedback on this document should be sent to Ms Scarff by noon on Tuesday 19 September. Ms Moroney offered to review the values section of the document.

c) Ceramics Room Committee

Mr Bowen reported that the works have been completed and the first session in the new Temporary Seanad Chamber is due to take place on Tuesday 26 September. The Committee is continuing to liaise with the Oireachtas, OPW and Executive on matters including plans to address vertical access to the Kildare Street building. The next meeting at Leinster House will take place on Wednesday 20 September.

The Board discussed a lecture series on women's suffrage which will be held in the Ceramics Room in 2018 and organised in partnership with Senator Ivana Bacik and the Oireachtas. **The GPAC committee agreed to advise to the Executive on the project, if required.**

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The Board heard that on Monday 2 October, the joint Oireachtas – National Cultural Institutions Forum will hold a meeting at the National Library to view the Library’s building plans over the next few years in the context of the whole Leinster House Complex.

The Ceann Comhairle will attend the meeting along with representatives of the OPW and National Gallery. The Museum will be represented by Prof. Kathleen James-Chakraborty and the Director.

d) GPAC

Prof. James-Chakraborty reported on behalf of the GPAC Committee.

The last meeting of the GPAC committee took place at the Natural History Museum’s storage facility at Beggar’s Bush. The Committee had the opportunity to meet with staff there.

It was agreed that the Secretary will circulate the Staff Newsletter when it is issued every month.

It was agreed that once exhibitions are agreed by the Management Committee, they will then be submitted to the GPAC Committee who will report to the Board.

The Board discussed the Decade of Commemorations and agreed that it would be useful to establish with the Department what the key upcoming dates for commemorations are. The Board agreed that in the coming years, it will be very important to present a large scale exhibition like ‘Proclaiming a Republic’ to reach a large audience. **It was agreed that the Executive should contact the Department to establish the key events to be marked for the remaining years of the Decade of Commemorations programme.**

The Board noted and approved the Creative Ireland Alignment Plan which will now be submitted to the Department.

e) HR Committee

The Chair reported that the last meeting of the HR Committee took place on Thursday 8 September. The Board noted the report from the Committee. The Chair reported that the Committee is tracking it’s progress against the resolutions agreed at the Board meeting of 16 March 2017. The Chair noted that at the Joint Oireachtas Committee hearing the Cathaoirleach had stated that the Museum may be invited back to report on progress.

[Redacted] *

The Board agreed with the proposal from the Director that all Museum sites should be closed on 31 January 2018 to allow all Museum staff to meet.

[Redacted] *

The Executive left the meeting.

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f) Director Review and Transition Committee

To be discussed under Item 4.

4. Key Discussion Item – Recruitment of a new Director

The Board gave the Director Review and Transition Committee leave to secure additional feedback on the draft job description, to finalise same and to appoint a provider for the recruitment of the next Director.

5. Date and venue of next meeting

The next meeting of the Board will take place on Thursday 16 November 2017 at 9.30am at the Natural History Museum on Merrion Street. Minister Heather Humphreys is confirmed to meet the Board on that date.