

Board of the National Museum of Ireland

Minutes of Meeting of the Board (*Supplementary*)

on Thursday 23rd July 2020 via video-conference

Present: Ms Catherine Heaney (Chair) Ms Denise Moroney
Ms Helen Shenton Mr Declan Nelson
Professor Ingrid Hook Professor Mary O'Dowd
Professor Kathleen James-Chakraborty Dr Andrew Power
Mr Ambrose Loughlin Mr John Bowen
Mr Paolo Viscardi Ms Judith McCarthy
Ms Mary Crotty

Apologies: Dr Linda King

In attendance: Ms Lynn Scarff (Director, NMI)
Mr Mark Sherry (Head of Finance & Procurement)
Ms Jade Dillon (Secretary to the Board, NMI)

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

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were conveyed for Dr King and it was noted that Dr Power would be joining the meeting at a later time. The minutes of 25th June were noted by the Board, however, as this was a supplementary meeting and dedicated to the discussion on finances, it was agreed that the minutes of the 25th June would be reviewed and approved at the following meeting.

a) Minister Catherine's Martin's visit to NMI

The Chair informed the Board that the Minister of Minister for Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sport and the Gaeltacht, Catherine Martin, T.D, was welcomed to NMI – Archaeology as the site's first visitor upon re-opening on Monday the 20th July, having been closed since March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Minister Martin was met by the Chair and the Director and was given a tour of the *Ór – Ireland's Gold* exhibition and *the Treasury* by Keeper of Irish Antiquities Division, Ms Maeve Sikora and the Head of Collections and Learning, Dr Audrey Whitty. The Chair and the Director reported that it was a thoroughly enjoyable visit and that they are looking forward to working with the new Minister; particularly in relation to NMI's community engagement strategy and *Strategic Plan: 2019-2022*.



c) Heritage

The Chair requested that the transfer of Heritage to the Department of Housing be discussed separately by the General Public Advisory Committee (GPAC).

Professor James-Chakraborty agreed to add this as an agenda item for the next GPAC meeting.

2. Financial Statements 2019

The Board noted the draft Financial Statements and the Chair invited the Chair of the Audit & Risk Committee, Mr Loughlin to provide the Board with an overview of the Financial Statements draft. Mr Loughlin informed the Board that the Audit & Risk Committee reviewed the Financial Statements on 9th July, in consultation with NMI's Head of Finance & Procurement, Mr Mark Sherry and the Director.

Mr Loughlin gave an overview of the work undertaken for completing the Financial Statements. Mr Loughlin informed the Board that the external audit will take place on Monday 27th July.

Mr Loughlin requested that any comments/queries from the Board on the Financial Statements draft should be forwarded to the Secretary prior to the 27th July.

The Board agreed to submit any feedback to the Secretary by said date.

Mr Loughlin requested that the Board give leave to the Chair and himself, in consultation with the Director and Mr Sherry, to finalise the text of the Financial Statements and submit to the Office of the Comptroller and Auditor General. The finalised Financial Statements will then be included in the next Board pack for noting.

The Board agreed to give leave to the Chair and Chair of ARC, in consultation with the Director and Mr Sherry, to finalise the text and sign-off on the Financial Statements.

The agreement was proposed by Mr Bowen and seconded by Prof James-Chakraborty.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked Mr Sherry for greatly improving NMI's financial reporting processes and that the level of professional oversight was very much appreciated by the Board.

3. Budget Estimates 2021

The Board noted the Budget Estimates 2021 and the Chair noted that the draft is cohesive and aligns well with NMI's Strategic Plan. The Chair requested that the Audit and Risk Committee review the budget estimates ahead of the submission to the Department of Media, Tourism, Arts, Culture, Sport and the Gaeltacht.

It was agreed that any amendments or feedback from the Board on the Budget Estimates document should be submitted to the Secretary by next Monday 27th July.

The Director gave an overview of the budget estimates for 2021 and informed the Board that the areas of prioritisation for NMI will be equality of access, capital projects and consolidation of NMI workforce.



The Director highlighted that attaining the Museum Standards Programme Ireland accreditation will also be a main priority for NMI in 2021.

The Board discussed the budget estimates and the Chair requested that any further comments be submitted to the Secretary by close of business on Monday 27th July. The Chair informed the Board that all comments will then be considered by the Audit & Risk Committee.

The Board agreed to submit any comments by said date.

The Chair and the Director agreed to draft a one-pager outlining NMI's key priorities for 2021 to enable what Board members to advocate on behalf of NMI.

It was agreed that the document would be circulated to the Board ASAP.

4. A.O.B

a) Rediscover Your Museum

On closing the meeting, the Chair informed the Board that she had visited NMI – Decorative Arts & History last weekend on her day off and found the recently re-opened site to be very welcoming. The Chair warmly encouraged the Board members to visit the NMI sites during the break and that the Executive would be grateful of any feedback.

Thank you

On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked the Director and the NMI team who have made great efforts ensuring that all NMI sites have been safely re-opened for both the public and staff. The Director thanked the Chair for her kind words and stressed the collective efforts made by NMI staff, and that she and the NMI team are thrilled to see visitors coming back on site to rediscover their museum.

5. Date of next meeting

Thursday 24th September at 10am

End of meeting.