

HORNIMAN PUBLIC MUSEUM AND PUBLIC PARK TRUST

The Minutes of the Board meeting of the Horniman Public Museum and Public Park Trust held on Monday 18 May 2015 at the Horniman Museum.

Present

Eve Salomon (Chair)
Judy Beard
Hilary Carty
Geoffrey Crossick
Molly Jackson
Sarah Kemp
Clare Paterson

Janet Vitmayer (Chief Executive)
Paula Thomas (Board Secretary, Finance Director)
Tim Corum (Director Curatorial and Public Engagement)
Victoria Pinnington (Director Communications and Income Generation)
Kirsten Walker (Director Collections Management and Special Projects)

1. Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest

All Board members were present.

Members of the Youth Panel had expressed an interest in accepting the Board's invitation to attend, but had been unable to attend this meeting due to it being during the exam period. As July's meeting is largely a business meeting it was agreed to reissue the invitation for the October Board meeting.

No conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes of the previous Board meetings and matters arising

2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting of 9 February 2015 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

2.2 All action points had been completed.

2.3 Matters arising

- No significant progress has been made in setting up the Master's course with Goldsmiths. It would not start until after the opening of the new galleries in 2018 and is therefore a longer term plan.
- Board membership: after discussions with DCMS it was agreed that recruitment for the three DCMS vacancies would not start before September 2015. The Board confirmed that for its two vacancies the roles would focus on a strategic leader in public engagement with science and a leader from

another non-museum cultural institution perhaps uniting buildings and gardens. Some names were suggested by trustees and it was agreed that initial conversations would be held to gauge interest and suitability before proceeding further.

3. Audit Committee meeting

The meeting noted the minutes from the last Audit Committee on 20 March 2015. The Chair thanked Sarah Kemp for taking on the role of Chair of the Audit Committee.

Sarah reported that she had asked the Audit Committee to look at its terms of reference to ensure that it focuses on the key priorities.

Internal audit had also been asked to circulate a self-assessment for the Audit Committee, which will be considered at the next meeting.

4. Management Report

The Board raised various questions arising from the Management Report and the following clarifications and comments were noted:

- Digital: the walrus twitter feed should be examined to see if he is 'chatty enough'.
- The Deputy Keeper's public lecture in Delhi was noted with interest. A trustee offered to use her contacts in India if it would help for the 2017/18 focus on India.
- Congratulations were given on the level of visitor numbers achieved and the steady progress being made. It was noted that this is likely to steady off until 2018 when the new galleries are scheduled to open.
- The recent Lates programme was being reviewed e.g. format, programming, marketing, numbers.
- It was a strong quarter for good press.
- The Anthropology redisplay academic support panel is impressive.
- The overall membership renewal rate of 55% compares with the ALVA group target rate of 85%. We are working to improve this. A trustee agreed to provide comparative data from another institution.
- Congratulations were given on the Crowdfunding success. The results are currently being analysed.

The Board reviewed the content and format of the **KPI dashboard**. It was agreed that the quarterly dashboard should also show the cumulative position. It was suggested that membership numbers and renewal rates could also be added and that there should be more trend analysis where possible. The fall in Gardens visitor numbers was explained by the introduction of new electronic counting software, which showed that the previous calculated figures had overstated numbers.

The Board considered the **Reserves policy** and agreed the following:

- To amend the policy so as to set £300,000 as a minimum level of free reserves rather than as a target.
- To designate £600,000 for Gallery development.

The Board approved the following as set out in the management report and appendices:

2.2 The signing of a contract for £130,000 for the hire of Robot Zoo as our family friendly bought-in exhibition for 2017.

5 Risk Register

The Board reviewed the Risk Register and confirmed that they were happy that it covered all significant risks.

The following comments were made with regard to specific risks:

- *IT resourcing is insufficient or not appropriate to meet the needs of the organisation.* The net risk has increased. Support was offered from trustees in other organisations and contacts. It was also suggested that the Arts Council might be interested in hearing about difficulties in resourcing IT in our size organisation with a view to possibly bringing similar organisations together to explore the issues.
- *Failure to invest in building infrastructure.* This is likely to remain red for the foreseeable future whilst other projects are going on and until the results of the Comprehensive Spending Review are known.
- *No long term financial strategy & Political and financial threat.* See agenda item 6.
- *Income generation doesn't grow quickly enough.* Still red in the light of the possible level of government cuts, despite recent success in this area.
- *Failing to meet demands of funders.* It was agreed that this item should be captured as part of another risk.
- *Non-execs and execs don't understand respective roles.* It was agreed the net risk was now low and it could therefore be removed, but should be reconsidered when there were new Board appointments.

6 Future Strategy

The Chair introduced a discussion on future financial strategy in the light of the recent General Election result and possible implications for public sector funding. There was a discussion about the strong story staff should be telling about the Horniman's national reach e.g. loans, partnerships, subject specialists.

The Chief Executive updated the Board on a recent meeting with DCMS at which the Horniman had been encouraged to look at what it would do if there were cuts of as much as 40% over the life of the new parliament. Trustees noted that the government is committed to free admission for national museums and that DCMS is also interested in exploring new models of funding with various museums.

The Board then considered ideas for income generation which were outlined by the Chief Executive. Most of the proposals are at an early stage and require a lot more work to decide whether or not they are feasible and would deliver a net benefit. The Board were enthusiastic about all the ideas but recognised the need to prioritise given the limited available staff resourcing. The following decisions were made:

- Conservatory upgrade, to allow all year round usage and lettings, to go ahead subject to obtaining funding.
- Professional assistance should be sought to test whether the areas discussed were feasible – reserves could be used to support early feasibility work.

7 Loans

The Board considered and approved the following loans:

7.1 Shogi board and pieces to the Novium Museum in Chichester as part of the Object in Focus loans programme, 5 August to 25 November 2015.

7.2 Various Japanese artefacts to the Musee d'ethnographie de Geneve for the exhibition "Le bouddhisme de Mme Butterfly – Le Japonisme Bouddhique", September 2015-January 10 2015.

8 Any other business

There was no other business.

9 Date of next meeting:

Quarterly Board Meeting: 13 July 2015 at 1pm in the Pavilion

PT

08/06/15

Summary of Action Points from Board meeting of 18 May 2015

Minutes ref:	Action	Date due	Who by	Progress
1	Invite YP member to Board Meeting	Oct 15	TC	
2.3	Arrange meeting with potential trustee.	July 15	ES	done
4	Provide Membership renewal rates from Southbank for comparison	July 15	MJ	
4	Make suggested improvements to dashboard	July 15	PT	done
5	Supply name of Southbank CIO	July 15	MJ	done
6	Take forward future project proposals as agreed	Oct 15	JV	

