

HORNIMAN PUBLIC MUSEUM AND PUBLIC PARK TRUST

The Minutes of the Board meeting of the Horniman Public Museum and Public Park Trust held in the Pavilion, on Thursday 14 October 2021

Present

Eve Salomon
Eva Appelbaum
Caroline Cole
Roma Dibua
Bunt Ghosh

Simon Hesketh
Clare Matterson
Mayowa Ochere
Carole Souter
Helen Williams

Nick Merriman (Chief Executive)
Paula Thomas (Board Secretary, Director, Finance and Corporate Services)
Victoria Pinnington (Director, Communications and Income Generation)
Kirsten Walker (Director, Collections Care and Estates)

1. Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Nico Iacuzzi sent his apologies.

No new conflicts of interest were declared.

2. Minutes of the previous Board meeting and matters arising

2.1. The minutes of the Board meeting of 9 July 2021 were agreed as a true record.

2.2. In relation to last meeting's closed session the Chair reported that DCMS have now made contact with the CEO and Secretary and are about to start the process to appoint the next Chair. They have sent a template for the role description. It was agreed that **Clare and Helen would assist the CEO and Secretary in preparing a draft for DCMS.**

2.3. Management reported that a small on-line shop is in the process of being set up as a trial.

2.4. There were no matters arising or action points not covered by the agenda.

3. Management report

The CEO presented the Management report for July - September 2021 and highlighted the following:

- A number of awards had been received since writing the report: Family Friendly Museum of the Year in the Large Museum category (Kids in Museums), two Green Flag awards for the Nature Trail and Gardens. These add to the two London in Bloom awards reported in the Management report.

- A score of 90% was received following the Visit England inspection. This would have made us eligible for a gold award but was received too late.
- The Civic University Agreement was launched on Tuesday.
- Diary date: 7 December HAIR private view.
- Two key members of staff are leaving us at the end of the month: JC Niala, who led on the review of the African Collections and Adem Holness who led on the 696 programme which has been very successful over the summer in bringing in new audiences.
- The Head of Content role, which is being recruited via an agency, has resulted in approximately 100 applications. The agency are interviewing 11 and will reduce this to a short list for the final interviews in early November.
- The Curator of Social Practice role has still to be advertised.
- The outcome of the Government's spending review is expected at the end of October.

The Director, Collections Care and Estates informed the Board about a problem with the ceilings in level 3 at the SCC. Although some sagging had been noticed previously, a topographical survey of the ceiling shows that this is worse than thought. The area has been made out of bounds for staff at the moment whilst a risk assessment is being carried out in conjunction with our health and safety advisor. The next step will be to remove all the insulation above the ceiling, do a proper survey and get an estimate of costs. The Anthropology collections are stored on this level. Those in the racking are protected but some are stored on top and are most at risk. There is no option to move these objects at the moment without endangering staff. Depending on the extent of the work required this could have a knock on effect on the rest of the capital projects both in timing and funds. It was agreed that DCMS should be notified as soon as a cost was available to discuss possible changes to use of the Infrastructure Fund grant this year and next.

Trustees approved the contract for Brick Dinos, the proposed family friendly temporary exhibition for 2023/24 with a value of £107k.

The following comments/queries were raised:

- Is there any update on the Schools Team which is currently under resourced?
Two posts are in the process of being recruited which will bring the team back up to the full complement planned in the restructure. In the meantime the number of schools bookings has been controlled. The new Schools Manager is keen to target schools where there is a high percentage of free school meals and there have been lots of enquiries so far.
- What are the plans regarding social distancing?
Although visitors still need to book some walk ups are allowed. Capacity is being regularly reviewed and increased. Masks are still encouraged but there seems to be more relaxed usage. The next ALVA visitor sentiment survey will be used to inform the next steps, but the current thinking is that restrictions may be removed in the New Year. It was noted that pre-booking is likely to have a detrimental effect on our efforts to bring in new audiences, and we should be looking to return to open access as soon as we can.
- The success of 696 in attracting new audiences is very positive. Are there any plans to increase the diversity of volunteers?
The Volunteering team is looking into this, particularly in relation to Youth Engagement. 696 has also given us a lead into wider recruitment networks.

Trustees congratulated all staff involved in areas covered by the awards.

The Board noted the IT review report and that it showed a clear plan to move the IT infrastructure in a positive direction. It was agreed that management would set up a meeting so that Eva could meet the IT and Digital teams and offer any appropriate insight and advice.

The Management Accounts for the five months to 31 August 2021 and the reforecast for the year were reviewed by the Board. Results are in line with expectations and there is no change in the overall expected level of deficit.

4. Horniman Museum Enterprises

The Chair presented an emailed report from Nico Iacuzzi on the previous day's Board meeting. The results for the year to date of £142k profit are very good and have already surpassed the forecast for the year (£117k). It is looking likely that full year profits could reach c£200k compared to 2019/20 results of c£250k which shows a very good recovery. Much of this is due to the Café and Venue Hire with the former reporting its best August ever. Management is now looking at longer term strategy and marketing.

5. Capital Projects Board

The Chair of the committee confirmed that there was nothing to add to the minutes of the last meeting which had been circulated.

6. Restitution Committee

It was confirmed that the Committee had now held its first meeting and the procedures had been put in place and were ready to go if a claim was received. The revised procedures were approved by the Board.

7. Corporate Plan/ACE NPO extension 22-23

The Board confirmed its email approval of the draft Corporate Plan 22-23 which had been submitted to Arts Council England for its NPO extension 22-23.

8. Governance Review

Sally Knight from Moore Kingston Smith presented her report on the Governance Review carried out during September. She thanked the trustees and executive for their openness and transparency which had helped enormously.

It was a really positive report which highlighted that so many of the boxes had been ticked in terms of governance requirements. The Horniman as a charity, company and arm's length government body is subject to lots of laws, regulations and practices but the governance shone through at all levels.

The report consists of a covering report and an appendix which details all the requirements that the Horniman was reviewed against together with areas of current good practice and those where improvements could be made. This latter document should be treated as working document to measure progress against.

The priorities are outlined in section 6 and indicate some kind of order for action but none are urgent. Areas to highlight are:

- There were varying views regarding Finance strategy with some viewing it as quite straightforward and others thinking it needed to be discussed in more depth at Board level. It is important that there is not an over dependence on the Audit Committee to look at finance nor an over reliance on the Finance Director.
- The Charity Commission has recently highlighted Diversity, Equality and Inclusivity. The Boards' approach to this is impressive and good progress is being made. However the EDI policy needs to be updated to catch up with the practical steps being taken.
- With the addition of the ACE Investment Principles which includes the role of the Board there is a fine balancing act between trustees 'leaning in' too much to the role of senior management. There is a good balance at the moment but trustees should be careful not to overstep their roles.
- A Board portal is needed for sharing Board papers and other confidential information. **It was agreed that Sally would send information on suitable ones and that Eva would advise as required.**

The Board accepted the report and recommendations, subject to some minor drafting changes. It was agreed to set up a working group of the Secretary, Roma and Bunt to go through the recommendations with a fine tooth comb and develop an action plan.

9. AOB

Mayowa Ochere was appointed to the Audit Committee. It was noted that an external member still needs to be recruited. Roma said she would consider possible recruits from her network.

Minutes ref:	Action	Date due	Who by	Progress
2.2	Prepare draft Chair role description	November	CM/HW/ NM/PT	Done
3.	Notify DCMS of SCC ceiling issues once cost known	asap	NM	Done
3.	Set up meeting between EA and IT/Digital teams	November	PT	VP has contacted EA
8.	Board portal to be researched and set up		PT	To be in place for March meeting
9.	Consider possible new external member of Audit Committee		RD	JD ready to be advertised