

**NATIONAL MUSEUMS SCOTLAND
BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024 AT THE
NATIONAL MUSEUM OF SCOTLAND, EDINBURGH**

Present:

Mr Ian Russell	Chairman
Prof Mary Bownes	Trustee
Ms Mimi Brophy	Trustee
Mr Adam Bruce	Trustee
Mr Stephen Dando	Trustee
Prof Manuel Fernández-Götz	Trustee
Mr Graeme Gibson	Trustee
Ms Beth McKillop	Trustee
Prof Richard Oram	Trustee
Prof Ian Wall	Trustee

In Attendance:

Dr Chris Breward (CB)	NMS Director
Dr Sam Alberti (SA)	Director of Collections
Ms Julie Brown (JB)	Head of Corporate Policy & Performance
Ms Ruth Gill (RG)	Director of Public Programmes
Ms Helen Ireland (HI)	Director of External Relations
Mr Keith Pentland (KP)	Director of Finance & Resources
Mr Peter Williamson (PW)	Managing Director of NMSE Ltd
Sadie McKinlay (SMcK)	Head of Development (for item 8)

Apologies:

Ms Ann Allen	Trustee
Prof Monojit Chatterji	Trustee
Dr Bridget McConnell	Trustee
Ms Jandy Stevenson	Trustee
Dr Laura Young	Trustee

PRE-BOARD SESSION

Anna Groundwater (Acting Keeper of Scottish History & Archaeology) gave an overview of the Scottish History & Archaeology Department's collections, their work, current opportunities and challenges, and invited questions from the Board.

Hugo Anderson-Whymark (Curator of Prehistory) gave a presentation on *Neolithic Burials* and Ella Paul (Assistant Curator of Renaissance & Early Modern History) gave a presentation on *Shipwrecks*.

The Trustees extended their thanks for the presentations.

ITEM 1 – APOLOGIES

1.1 Apologies were received from Ann Allen, Monojit Chatterji, Bridget McConnell, Jandy Stevenson and Laura Young.

**ITEM 2 – MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
7 FEBRUARY 2024**

NMS (2024) 1st Mtg

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2024 were approved.

ITEM 3 – MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Matters arising from the last meeting were taken under the main agenda items.

ITEM 4 – DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

4.1 It was noted that there were no declarations of interests from Board members in relation to the substantive items on the agenda.

ITEM 5 – DIRECTOR’S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES

NMS (2024) 06

5.1 The Director presented his report which had been circulated. Highlights included:

- Across our four museums, we had welcomed 2.9 million visits in the financial year to the end of February, on forecast and up 3% on the same period in 2022/23.
- On 25 January, ITV’s breakfast show, *Good Morning Britain*, broadcast live from the National Museum of Scotland’s Grand Gallery to its 1.65 million viewers, with segments regarding Burns material from our collection.
- *Maps: Memories from the Second World War* opened on 9 March at the National War Museum.
- 174 schools totalling 5,000 pupils booked for the popular Digital Schools Sessions covering: Biodiversity-Life in Scotland; The Romans; the Second World War; and Ancient Egypt.

5.2 The Director gave a verbal update on the recent meetings with the Cabinet Secretary and our Sponsor Team, and Trustees noted the appointment of our new Minister for Culture, Europe & International Development, Kaukab Stewart MSP. The Director also reported on the latest meeting of the National Museums Directors’ Council and his attendance at the Queen Elizabeth Memorial Committee.

5.3 Keith Pentland updated Trustees on the latest discussions with the Scottish Government and the trade unions regarding the 35-hour working week at NMS.

ITEM 6 – FINANCIAL REPORT

NMS (2024) 07

6.1 Keith Pentland presented the report which had been circulated.

6.2 The Board noted:

- Current information suggested we would break even.
- Backdated pay increases were processed in December.
- The additional 2% increase to team members earning less than £65k was paid in January.

ITEM 7 – COLLECTIONS & RESEARCH REPORT

NMS (2024) 08

7.1 Trustees noted the Collections & Research Report

ITEM 8 – DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2024-2028

NMS (2024) 09

8.1 Sadie McKinlay presented the new Development Strategy which had been circulated and set out a new approach for fundraising in the context of the 2022-27 Strategic Plan.

8.2 There followed a wide-ranging discussion including:

- The importance of NMS' global reputation and its charitable status.
- The need to be very focused and targeted in our activity due to limited resources.
- The value of objects displayed overseas and touring exhibitions in raising our profile.
- Corporate giving/membership opportunities more locally.
- Gaining a greater understanding of donor motivation.
- As well as encouraging more general donations, developing engagement further around themes/areas of particular interest.
- An explanation of how success is measured and the need for investment in terms of staff to achieve our aims.

8.3 The Board of Trustees:

- Approved the Development Strategy 2024-2028.
- Appreciated the importance of its role in individually providing support to the Development Team.

Trustees

ITEM 9 –BUDGET 2024/2025

NMS (2024) 10

9.1 Keith Pentland presented the Budget for 2024/25 which had been circulated. This was further to the earlier draft Budget discussed at the last Board meeting at which the Chairman and Director confirmed that our 2024/25 budget was showing a very substantial deficit, comprising mainly of the 5% cut imposed by the Scottish Government in the Grant in Aid received by NMS.

9.2 Trustees queried and discussed the several specific cost saving and revenue generating items which had been included and considered necessary to balance our budget for 2024/25 and noted that these had been considered by the Finance Committee.

It was recognised that the other National Collection bodies were facing the same challenges, the funding restraints were unlikely to change in the near future, and that the outlook for next financial year was a concern.

9.3 The Board of Trustees:

- Approved the 2024/2025 Budget.
- Acknowledged the importance of clear communication of the Budget to staff, stakeholders and the general public.
- Noted the Financial Plan for 2025/26 and 2026/27, and that they would be considered further by the Executive Team and the Finance Committee.

CB, HI, KP

KP

ITEM 10 – REPORTS FROM BOARD COMMITTEES

(i) People & Remuneration Committee

10.1 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the People & Remuneration Committee meeting held on 23 January had been circulated.

(ii) Collections Development Committee

10.2 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Collections Development Committee meeting held on 5 February had been circulated.

(iii) Finance Committee

10.3 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Finance Committee meeting held on 28 February had been circulated.

(iv) Estates Committee

10.4 The Chairman noted that the Estates Committee had met on 8 March.

10.5 In the absence of Ann Allen (Chair the Committee), Graeme Gibson (Committee member) confirmed there were no exceptional issues to report on.

(v) Audit & Risk Committee

10.6 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the Audit & Risk Committee meeting held on 13 March had been circulated.

(vi) National Museums Scotland Enterprises Ltd Board

10.7 The Chairman noted that the draft minutes of the NMSE Ltd Board meeting held on 15 March had been circulated.

(vii) Nominations & Governance Committee

10.8 The Chairman reported that the Scottish Government's advert for new NMS Trustees would open on 02 April and close on 29 April. He undertook to circulate the link to the advert as soon as it went "live".

Chair

10.9 The Chairman confirmed that Trustees' comments arising from the recent Board Effectiveness review would be considered at the next Nominations & Governance Committee meeting.

ITEM 11 – FORWARD PROGRAMME OF BUSINESS

NMS (2024) 11

11.1 The Board noted the Forward Programme of Business.

ITEM 12 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 There was no other business.

ITEM 13 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13.1 The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5 June 2024 at the National Museum of Scotland. It was noted that the meeting would be preceded by a visit to the National War Museum.