



Historic Royal Palaces is the charity that looks after:

**Tower of London
Hampton Court Palace
Banqueting House
Kensington Palace
Kew Palace
Hillsborough Castle
and Gardens**

We help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built.

We raise all our own funds and depend on the support of our visitors, members, donors, sponsors and volunteers.

Minutes DRAFT

Meeting name: **Board of Trustees**

Date of meeting: **Thursday 1 October 2020**

Location: **In person Apt 44, Hampton Court Palace and via videoconference**

Attendees: Rupert Gavin (Chairman), Zeinab Badawi, Lord Houghton, Sarah Jenkins, Jane Kennedy, Tim Knox, Carole Souter, Sir Michael Stevens, Robert Swannell, Dr Jo Twist, Sue Wilkinson, Professor Michael Wood

In attendance: Nicola Andrews, John Barnes, Jane Crowther, Gina George, Rachael Gilleard, Sue Hall, Andrew Jackson, Tom O'Leary, Adrian Phillips, Dan Wolfe

Apologies: None

1. Opening business

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Trustees and the Executive to the meeting. Regarding conflicts of interest, Jane Kennedy is a Senior Partner of Purcell. Purcell has been selected as the architect for the build of the Orangery Learning Centre at Kensington Palace. Tim Knox is partner of Todd Longstaffe-Gowan and Secretary of Todd Longstaffe-Gowan Ltd, which provides landscape design services for HRP. Todd Longstaffe-Gowan is also an Honorary Patron of HRP. Carole Souter is Chair of the National Trust/University of Oxford Partnership Board and is chairing the Oxford University Oriel College Commission into the Rhodes legacy, of which Zeinab Badawi is a member. Robert Swannell is Chairman of UK Government Investments.
- 1.2 The minutes of the meeting of 28 August were approved.



2. Update

2.1 *Opening arrangements*

As at September, HRP is ahead of budget in terms of visit income, due to the visit mix and higher than anticipated yield. Visit numbers have been better than expected at some points, but this has not been the case across all of the palaces. Visit numbers are expected to decline from October, although the next moment of focus will be October half term.

Lord Houghton suggested that lessons could be learned in terms of the balance of visit numbers/ price/ visit experience. Analysis of visit mix and yield is currently being carried out and this point will be discussed at the next Trustees' strategy session.

In response to a question from Jane Kennedy, Nicola Andrews explained that the pay barrier at Hampton Court Palace had been moved to include the gardens and catering outlets in order to manage visit numbers safely. In due course, we will review the suitability of this approach for the longer term.

2.2 *Staffing*

Jane Crowther reminded the Board that the proposals currently out to consultation were to reduce FTE by 86, putting 146 roles at risk and 370 people on notice that they may be at risk of redundancy. Changes to terms and conditions have also been proposed.

Discussions have taken place with Trade Unions and employee representatives and will continue throughout the consultation. Key themes emerging so far are: a sense of inequity between the impact on the front of house and back of house/ management staff (while this is not borne out by the data, it is a widespread perception); the selection process; changes to terms and conditions and proposals for part time working. Alternative proposals by staff will be given consideration.

The Board agreed that the executive should continue the consultation on the basis set out in the proposals, balancing the requirement to ensure that the business need is met with the principles of equity and consistency across the organisation.

2.3 *Financial update*

The financial position is being monitored against the Revised Operating Budget agreed in June 2020. Income is ahead of the post-covid forecast but operating expenditure slightly worse, due to phasing of payroll expenditure and expenditure on PPE.



Sir Michael Stevens asked for information on a palace by palace basis. This will be sent separately. He also suggested that the team should seek more opportunities to expand ecommerce. Dan Wolfe agreed, and explained that the new Commercial department provided structure for greater cross-promotion of products. In response to Robert Swannell's suggestion that certain staff do more to promote HRP products, Dan agreed to look at this and explained that future TV productions could have a greater amount of product placement.

Jo Twist asked about the plan for membership. Dan Wolfe explained that retention rates have been good, although it was challenging to recruit new members given the lack of visits to palaces and available staff. Further thought will be given to this.

3. Fundraising strategy for projects

3.1 John Barnes presented the paper, explaining that it assumes that HRP is successful in its fundraising applications, but of course this is a constantly changing situation. The list is presented for overall approval of the priorities; approval for individual projects will be sought at the appropriate time. The return on investment for each project will be added where possible.

Jane Kennedy noted that the Banqueting House was not on the list. This remains a long term ambition but is not feasible at this point. She also highlighted the importance of planned maintenance and John Barnes noted that we have been able to increase the investment in the estate recently due to the receipt of a government grant for unfinished conservation projects.

Aside from the Tower Moat proposal, the Board agreed that, subject to funding, the projects presented were the right ones to prioritise going forward.

4. Tower of London Moat proposal

4.1 Tom O'Leary presented the proposals for the Tower of London Moat in 2022, acknowledging that since the paper had been sent, DCMS had confirmed that the project will not be included in their funded Jubilee programme, and therefore finance will be needed from elsewhere (loan, donations) to cover that part of the cost.

The key themes emerging from the Board discussion were: that the sustainability aspect of the project needs further work, that the updated funding position means that the financial risk was likely to be too great at this point in time, that experience on



previous projects suggested that further contingency and enhanced project management would be required – both of which would add to the budgeted cost, that the public mood in 2022 was difficult to judge, and may not be sympathetic to the themes and presentation. Tom O’Leary explained that an alternative proposal has been developed. A small group of Trustees will consider the Board’s comments and the alternative proposal and revert back to the Board.

5. Inclusivity

- 5.1 The Board noted the further letter from the Secretary of State on contested heritage. Sue Wilkinson fed back on the Trustees’ inclusiveness subgroup meeting, at which the group had agreed to present back its thoughts and proposals to the Board later in the year.

6. Serious Incident Report to the Charity Commission

- 6.1 The Board considered the report and agreed that the incident that was brought to HRP’s attention by the Charity Commission did not warrant a Serious Incident Report, but that the situation would be kept under review.

7. Register of interests

- 7.1 The changes to the register of interests were noted.

8. AOB

- 8.1 None

Next meeting, 9.30am, 18 November 2020.

