



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

Minutes

Meeting name: Board of Trustees

Time and Date of meeting: 9.30am, 19th January 2022

Location: Hampton Court Palace, Garden Room
Microsoft Teams

Attendees: Rupert Gavin (Chair), Zeinab Badawi, Camilla Finlay, Lord Houghton, Sarah Jenkins (SJ), Tim Knox, Carole Souter, Sir Michael Stevens, Robert Swannell, Jo Twist, Sue Wilkinson, Michael Wood (MW)

In attendance (HRP): John Barnes (JB), Nicola Andrews, Howard Beeston, Jane Crowther (JC), Andrew Jackson, Antonia Newman, Tom O’Leary, Adrian Phillips, Dan Wolfe (DW), Lorna Hudson (LH), Rosie Baines (minutes), Caroline Rand (items 2 and 3), Nigel Walley (items 2 and 3)

1. Opening Business

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed the Trustees and the Executive to the meeting. Howard Beeston (interim Finance Director) and Antonia Newman (Director of Development) were introduced. This is Zeinab Badawi’s final meeting as a Trustee – The Chair and Trustees conveyed their gratitude for her support and contribution to HRP’s Board over the last six years.
- 1.2 Regarding conflicts of interest, 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
- 1.3 The Minutes from the meeting of 30th September 2021 were approved.
 - 1.3.1 On item 4.5, it was noted that agreements have now been signed.
 - 1.3.2 On item 11.3, LH confirmed that training will begin this year.



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2. Monitoring Performance

2.1 CEO Report November 2021:

2.1.1 The report was taken as read.

2.1.2 It was noted that the gender pay gap report does not cover the majority of the period of the Covid-19 pandemic – next year’s report will reflect staffing changes over this period.

2.2 CEO Report January 2022

2.2.1 Trustees noted the strong performance of festive events across palaces, especially considering the pressures of the Omicron Coronavirus variant.

2.2.2 Trustees discussed coordination between HRP and the MoD at the Tower following the incident in December. The importance of this relationship was noted, for HRP as well as for the public experience.

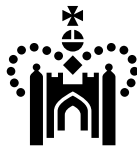
2.3 Review against April Budget, and Year-End Forecast

2.3.1 We are now forecasting a year-end improvement of 13m against the April Forecast, driven primarily by Visitor Performance and savings in Operational Expenditure.

2.3.2 Some projects will require carryover into 2022-23. For all main projects, budgets are on track and grant criteria are being met.

2.3.3 Trustees queried the higher-than-budgeted spend in Marketing and PR. DW confirmed that the spend is as expected but budget was originally ‘held’ due to the uncertainty of Covid-19 developments. It is now clear that releasing this budget mid-way through the year had a positive impact. SJ noted that investment in Marketing at this point is hugely valuable.

2.3.4 It was agreed that the spend on IS back services looks low considering the focus on this area e.g. by the Audit & Risk Committee. JB confirmed that investment in this area is planned, and due to be higher in 2022-23. The Executive noted that IS investment is also represented in other areas of the organisation, for example the Public Engagement Team’s work on Digital Outreach.



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3. Operating Plan and Budget

- 3.1 This paper represents a Draft Operating Plan and Budget - it will be finalised in discussion with the F&IC, and put to the Board for ratification in April. The Budget takes into account lower and upper likelihoods of visitor performance, with even the lower scenario delivering on the F&IC's recommendation for cash & investment levels.
- 3.2 The Operating Plan and Budget is guided by HRP's Cause and Strategic Aims. There is a focus on preserving cash while investing in current staff, and making planned project investments to support visitor performance.
- 3.3 Trustees discussed the Operating Plan and Budget, with comments being passed to the F&IC for their consideration:
 - 3.3.1 Trustees agreed on the importance of retaining and investing in staff at this point, noting the high turnover seen in many sectors. With ambitious plans for 2022-23, it is crucial that critical vacancies are not left open. It was noted that when considering retention of staff, comparisons be made looking both at the heritage/charities sectors and more widely.
 - 3.3.2 Trustees asked the Executive to consider the potential for HRP to play a part in the growing awareness of mental wellness.
 - 3.3.3 Trustees considered the extent and variety of external factors which will affect our performance in 2022-23 – for example, the return of international visitors, rises in the cost of living, and Platinum Jubilee celebrations. We will need to plan how to recognise and respond flexibly to these different factors. The Operating Plan process is already less rigid than it was pre-pandemic, which worked well in 2021-22. Trustees asked the Executive to ensure that our resources are flexible, as well as our finances and processes.

4. Kensington Palace Orangery and Extension

- 4.1 The paper was taken as read. The completion of this project was already approved by Trustees in December 2020, however the project was subsequently put on hold due to uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. Trustees were asked to



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reapprove the investment because of the increased costs, which are largely due to inflation.

4.2 Trustees considered that we should be sensitive to the current climate of high inflationary pressures when considering the contingencies attached to other projects, as many will be affected in the same way.

4.3 Trustees approved the investment.

5. Superbloom Working Group Report

5.1 The Superbloom Working Group met for the first time in December, with another meeting due in early February.

5.2 The programme has now been publicly announced. There has already been an overwhelming response from schools and volunteers.

5.3 Development and sponsorship opportunities are progressing well.

5.4 The subject of the legacy project will be covered in the next Working Group meeting and reported back to Trustees thereafter.

6. Governance Matters

6.1 Committee/Working Group Terms of Reference:

6.1.1 Trustees noted the amendments to the ToR for the Nominations and Governance Committee

6.1.2 Trustees noted the new ToRs for the Inclusivity Working Group, the Digital & Technology Working Group, and the Research Strategy Board.



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6.2 Update from the Audit & Risk Committee:

- 6.2.1 2020-21 Accounts have now been signed by DCMS and the NAO. Trustees noted that with NAO scrutiny increasing and widening in breadth, we must ensure sufficient resourcing in the Finance team to manage this for the 2021-22 process.
- 6.2.2 Areas recently covered by ARC include Cyber Security, Sustainability (including flood risk) and the Governance Structure below Trustee level.
- 6.2.3 Areas identified for focus in 2022-23 include Incident Management and the Ticketing System.

6.3 Update from the Nominations & Governance Committee:

- 6.3.1 Michael Wood has been reappointed for a second term as a Trustee of HRP.
- 6.3.2 The process to appoint a new Constable of the Tower of London is underway, with completion due in Summer 2022. Lord Houghton has been supporting the process.
- 6.3.3 The process to appoint a new Queens Trustee is underway, with completion due in March 2022 when Zeinab Badawi's tenure ends.
- 6.3.4 Carole Souter is due to end her tenure in April 2022. However, the demands of the DCMS process to appoint a new DCMS Trustee mean that this may be extended. Ministerial approval is therefore being sought for a six-month extension to CS's tenure.
- 6.3.5 The process to appoint a new Chair is underway. The deadline for applications is 21st January 2022, however it is likely that this will be extended by DCMS.

6.4 Update from the Inclusivity Working Group:

- 6.4.1 The first meeting of the Staff Inclusivity Network has taken place, and subsequently three co-chairs were confirmed.



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- 6.4.2 The Working Group has discussed areas such as data collection and staff demographics, recognising that ethnicity and social mobility are among the important dimensions in this regard.
- 6.4.3 Trustees noted the varied feedback that has been received in response to online and onsite content telling lesser-known stories, and agreed the importance of supporting staff to share these stories.

6.5 Update on the Staff Diversity, Inclusion and Equality Review:

- 6.5.1 Trustees thanked SJ, as well as JC and her team for their thorough review of this area. It was noted that in this review, the voice of the minority was a particular focus, to identify areas which could otherwise be missed.
- 6.5.2 The Staff Listening Exercise has already led to several ongoing actions. For example, staff training on Micro-aggressions has been written and is due to be rolled out in the coming weeks. Feedback on recruitment and progression practices has also triggered a review of this area to be carried out in the coming months.

6.6 Update from the Research Strategy Board:

- 6.6.1 HRP's joint application for a grant to research Imperial Gardens has not been successful.
- 6.6.2 Various other proposals are being considered for research applications.
- 6.6.3 Consideration is still being given to the possibility of expanding our knowledge of Jewish stories at the Tower and more widely.

7. Any Other Business

- 7.1 MW raised some ideas for future content to be considered by the Executive.
- 7.2 As HRP approaches the end of the second year affected by Covid-19, the Trustees thanked the Executive for all their work as well as that of their teams.



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Next meeting: 12th April 2022, 9.30am, Tower of London

Meeting Actions

Item	Action	Whom	Status
3.1	F&IC to discuss Trustees' comments and work with the Executive to finalise the 2022-23 Operating Plan and Budget, to be presented to the Board for ratification in April	RG (Chair of F&IC)	Complete – on 12th April Trustee Board agenda