



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

Minutes

- Meeting name: HRP Trustees Board
- Time and date: 09:30-12:30, 24 October 2023
- Location: Tower of London, New Armouries Suite
- Attendees: Carole Souter (Chair), Lisa Burger (LB), Nicholas Coleridge (NC), Sarah Jenkins (SJ), Tim Knox (TK), Sir Michael Stevens (MS), William Fall (WF) for items 1-8, Sue Wilkinson (SW), Jo Twist (JT), Michael Wood (MW)
- In attendance: John Barnes (JB), Nicola Andrews (NA), Anupam Ganguli (AG), Antonia Newman (AN), Tom O’Leary (TO’L), Adrian Phillips (AP), Dan Wolfe (DW), Stephen Corri (SC), Rhiannon Goddard (RG) for item 7.
- Guest: Tamsin Cooper (TC), *Forward Institute* for item 5

1. Opening Business

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed NC to the meeting.
- 1.2 The Board noted with sadness the passing of Patricia Swannell and that a memorial had been held in her honour which had been attended by a number of trustees.
- 1.3 The Board noted its thanks to MS who would be retiring as the royal Household’s representative on the Board in 2024.
- 1.4 MS thanked CS on the Board’s behalf for the hugely positive impact she had had on HRP during her time as interim Chair and noted that there would be a celebratory lunch following the February Board meeting.
- 1.5 No new conflicts of interest were recorded.
- 1.6 The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record.



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- 1.7 The Board noted that actions arising from the previous meeting were covered in the papers for this meeting or recorded as ongoing actions though the paper on long term investment had been reviewed by the Finance Committee rather than being presented to the Board.

2. Monitoring Performance

2.1 *CEO Report's October 2023*

The Board had received and noted the CEO's report for October 2023.

In discussion the Board noted:

- Following successful trials, the £1 ticket offer would now be a permanent part of HRPs ticketing mix
- The update on discussions in respect of the Gunpowder Plot show
- The impressive results and ongoing excellent work being done by the team at Kew, which trustees noted with thanks
- An update on the Hillsborough City Deal process
- Scope for a themed river cruise which would be considered by the Executive Team before coming back to the Board in due course
- HRP's accreditation as a member of the Sunflower Scheme which seeks to promote awareness of hidden disabilities
- The launch of HRP's new digital visitor guide film and tv tour
- Budgeted recruitment of accelerator roles which would support delivery of our emerging strategy, to become a charity for everyone
- Plans to evolve HRP's accommodation at Kensington. It was hoped that trustees would have the opportunity to visit the new Clore Learning Centre and *Untold Stories* exhibition in Kensington during March 2024
- Ongoing positive commercial performance across retail and membership recruitment operations
- A contract requiring Board approval, and which would need to be progressed in advance of the February Board, would be circulated by email following the meeting
- An update on upcoming development events and AN thanked trustees for their support on a number of initiatives

2.2 *Major Projects*

The Board received the major projects report and a verbal update on priority areas, noting the need to be mindful of lessons learned as we delivered the portfolio of projects.

2.3 *September 2023 Management Accounts*



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The Board received and noted the September management accounts as well as a verbal update on the current position. Trustees were pleased to note HRP's continuing strong performance, and thanked the HRP teams for their efforts and determination but also noted the need to maintain a close eye on performance given the external landscape.

3. Annual Report and Accounts

- 3.1 The Board had received and noted the pack of papers constituting the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts for 2022-23 all of which had been reviewed in advance by the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee.
- 3.2 The Board noted the reports of the internal and external auditors and, on the recommendation of the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee, approved the Annual Report and Accounts and the letter of representation for signature by CS on the Board's behalf outside the meeting.

4. Collections Assurance

- 4.1 The Board had received and noted a paper which summarised the systems and processes in place to protect HRP's collections. The Board expressed confidence in HRP's approach and noted that RSM (HRP's internal audit providers) would also be undertaking a further audit of our systems which would be shared with the Audit, Risk & Assurance Committee in the first instance.

5. Strategy development update

- 5.1 The Board received a presentation on the process to develop a new long term strategy for HRP, and then discussed key themes emerging from their own individual discussions with the *Forward Institute*. The Board also noted the importance of the four new strategic shifts – *extending reach, removing barriers, being relevant* and *for the future*, and how these would help focus HRP's work in a way that would maximise charitable impact.

In further discussion the Board noted: the delicate balance between optimising HRP's commercial approach with delivering strategic charitable impact; the positive impact working in partnership can have; the need to measure, evaluate and understand the impact and outcomes from our work; the importance of HRP's digital offer in engaging those for whom there were physical and geographical barriers to access; the importance of developing a decision making framework which enabled work to be prioritised in line with our strategic ambition; the importance of engaging HRP's internal and external stakeholders with the ambition; and the profound effect our new strategic ambition would have on HRP's culture.



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The Board noted that the feedback from their discussions would inform an upcoming strategy session for HRP's senior leadership team. Two informal virtual sessions would be scheduled during December and January for trustees to engage with the emerging strategy. The Board would then be invited to sign-off the high level strategy at its February meeting in order that detailed plans to operationalise delivery against the four strategic shifts could be further developed.

6. Digital & Technology update

- 6.1 The Board had received and noted an update on the development of HRP's digital and technology roadmap and discussed how work in this area would inform and enable the development of HRP's overarching organisational strategy. In further discussion the Board noted the need to ensure investment in this area and also in continuing to build HRP's resilience against cyber attacks into our approach.

7. Tower 2030

- 7.1 The Board had received and noted a paper which outlined proposals to bring together a series of projects and initiatives focused on the future of the Tower of London in a way that would ensure they delivered maximum impact in support of HRP's ambition to become a charity for everyone. The Board approved the overall trajectory and approach, noting how helpful it would be to begin to build a narrative for future funding and investment, and that individual projects would be brought for approval in due course.

8. Approvals

The Board received, noted and approved papers in respect of the following recommendations:

- 8.1 *Royal Armouries MoU*
- 8.2 *TOL Broad Arrow Tower Investment*
- 8.3 *BQH Project design and scope* – noting that an investment decision would be presented to Trustees in April 2024
- 8.4 *Access rights / variation to contract* (noting this had already been approved previously by email)
- 8.5 *Acquisition proposal: portrait of Lord Marcus Hill*

9. Governance Matters



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9.1 **Nominations & Governance**

The Board received a verbal update on the Committee's 8 September meeting.

9.2 **Audit & Risk Committee**

The Board received an update on the Committee's 17 October meeting.

10. **Working Groups and Boards**

The Board noted the summary of discussions from the various working groups.

11. **Schedule of business for 2023**

The Board received and noted a schedule of Board and committee meetings for 2024.

Previous Meeting Actions

Item meeting	Action	Lead	Status
9.2 Jul 23	<i>Re: Board apprentice scheme</i> - Trustees requiring more information on the <i>Board Buddy</i> role should contact the Company Secretary for further information.	SC	Ongoing
2.1 Oct 23	<i>Re recruitment</i> : consideration would be given to ensuring Trustees were engaged at the right point in the process and in a way which continued to allow scope for the Executive to act as needs be to fill budgeted vacancies	JB/AG	Feb 2024 Board