



**MINUTES OF THE 208<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF  
THE TRUSTEES OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM  
HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL  
ON MONDAY 13 JULY 2020**

Members Present:	Sir Andrew Pulford (Chair)	(AP)
	Ms Maggie Appleton (CEO)	(MA)
	Mr Peter Bateson	(PB)
	Ms Laurie Benson	(LB)
	Dr Carol Cole	(CC)
	Dr Rodney Eastwood	(RE)
	Mr Richard Holman	(RH)
	Ms Catriona Lougher	(CL)
	Ms Julie McGarvey	(JM)
	Mr Andrew Reid	(AR)
	Mr Nick Sanders	(NS)
	Mr Michael Schindler	(MS)
In attendance	Ms Marguerite Jenkin (Director of Finance and Resources)	(MJ)
	Mr Barry Smith (Director of Visitor and Commercial Development)	(BS)
	Ms Karen Whitting (Director of Content and Programmes)	(KW)
	Air Cdre Steve Horne (Director Air Staff RAF)	(SH)
	Mr Seb Cox (Head of AHB) Research Board report only	(SC)
	Mr Edward Sharman (Head of Development) Item 4 fundraising	(ES)
Minutes	Mrs Vanessa White – (PA to the CEO)	(VW)

**ITEM 1 – CHAIR’S OPENING REMARKS / APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

- 1.1 ■ welcomed everyone to the online meeting and congratulated the Museum team on reopening and their work during the lockdown period and advised he would be writing again to all staff to express the thanks of the Board. The challenge now is to grow the Museum offer whilst retaining the confidence of staff and visitors.
- 1.2 There were no apologies for absence.
- 1.3 There were no declarations or conflicts of interest reported.

**ITEM 2 - APPROVAL OF MINUTES, MATTER ARISING, REVIEW OF ACTIONS TABLE**

- 2.1 The minutes of the Special meetings due to COVID held on 11 May and 9 June and the full Board meeting on 23 March 2020 Board were approved.

- 2.2 (3.12) The action for Trustees to share ideas on how to broaden the Museum's offer during the COVID-19 period had been superseded by events – **closed**.
- 2.3 (5.8) The budget reforecast had been circulated in May – **closed**.
- 2.4 (12.1) ■■■ had written to all staff during to bolster spirits during lockdown – **closed**.
- 2.5 (11.2) The Board away day had been rescheduled to be held in conjunction with the September Board meeting at Cosford – **closed**.
- 2.6 (6.4) The Safeguarding training session had been rescheduled for December - **closed**.
- 2.7 (3.2) Colindale tube station refurbishment updates – **ongoing**.
- 2.8 (4.10) The review of Business Plan PIs with budget holders is part of the 2020-21 business planning work – **closed**.
- 2.9 (7.5) Royal Charter is in progress and will be discussed under item 4 below – **ongoing**.
- 2.10 (8.5) Café pricing – **closed**.
- 2.11 (4.9.9) RAFMAF continue to work on their strategy and they will consider the MOU once this work is complete – **ongoing**.

### **Item 3 - EXECUTIVE REPORT**

#### **Business Plan monitor and KPI dashboard**

- 3.1 ■■■ advised that the Business Plan monitor and KPI dashboard had been updated and a table which included an update of events cancelled, moved online or continuing during the COVID-19 period had been circulated with the Board papers.

#### **Reopening**

- 3.2 ■■■ thanked sub-committees for their help in reviewing the staff and visitor principles and protocols prior to reopening.
- 3.3 The Museum was the first national museum to reopen on 6 July and had received very positive feedback on the reopening film, good press coverage and excellent visitor reviews. Following the first few days of reopening and given the large spaces available and the appetite to visit, the Museum had increased its daily ticket allocation from 400 to 800. Visitors were delighted to be at the Museum and the only disappointment reported to staff were that Hangars 3/4/5 and the playground were closed in London. However, staff were enabling access to the closed hangars where possible ahead of all hangars opening on 20 July. Hangar 1 is closed in Cosford but does not contain the most iconic objects so has caused no problems. ■■■ reported that 50% more staff were needed on site to manage social distancing and that front of house teams were being supported in this by back of house colleagues. ■■■ thanked ■■■ and ■■■ and ■■■ for visiting during the reopening week.
- 3.4 ■■■ advised that since reopening 6000 visitors had booked online, retail had done better than expected and visitor giving had been positive with donations made onsite and visitors donating in advance when pre booking parking (currently 30% are pre

booking parking) and guidebooks. The Museum is looking to release 1,500 pre-booked tickets a day during the summer holidays which is above the number of daily visitors normally expected during the period.

- 3.5 ■ advised that volunteers had been keen to return and had been a great help in assisting with reopening.
- 3.6 ■ advised that London had seen no shows of 22% at London and 40% at Cosford on pre-booked tickets and were managing this by overselling the slots by a commensurate amount.
- 3.7 ■ advised that visitors were adhering to the 2M distance but that there are pinch points where it is helpful to have a person managing the flow. The key areas are at both entrances which the timed tickets are helping the team to manage. The Museum has been cautious in having a larger number of staff on site and these are likely to be needed should the numbers rise to 1,500 during the summer period. At the end of each day the onsite teams provide feedback on any issues for follow up. For those staff who are anxious about returning to site the Museum is offering conversations on Teams with a member of staff onsite, a buddying system, and a site visit prior to returning to work.
- 3.8 ■ reported that timed ticketing would continue throughout the summer as visitors tend to all turn up in the first couple of hours which could create social distancing issues. ■ advised that ticketing is critical as it front loads the safety information and enables the Museum to contact visitors should there be a case of COVID-19 reported on site or in the event of a second lockdown. 10% of tickets are held back for those who turn up without booking but they are also required to provide their details as the Museum currently holds visitor information for 21 days for track and trace purposes. Ticketing also enables visitor feedback and the opportunity on booking to tick a box to stay in touch with the Museum.
- 3.9 ■ advised that the Museum keeps a record of all COVID-19 safety measures and protocols in place and that all documentation is kept and updated as government advice changes.
- 3.10 ■ advised that the rise in the number of online viewings of Museum content was due mainly to COVID-19 but also thanks the active work of teams to push out and promote content and the success of the tri-Service museum VE day. ■ said that this proved there is a huge online market and that it would be a challenge to sustain those number going forward.
- 3.11 ■ reported that RAFMAF had donated towards the production of online content and the provision of packs and activities to support local communities during closure.
- 3.12 ■ reported that the London Borough of Barnet would continue to use the Museum's Dermot Boyle wing as a food hub until September as there will be no corporate bookings in the space till then.
- 3.13 ■ said that the RAF were grateful to the Museum for the VE day and Battle of Britain content produced by the Museum. ■ advised that the Museum continues to work with the RAF on the Battle of Britain commemorations / celebrations and thanked ■, who chairs the joint RAF / RAF Museum group for his support.

### **Research Board report**

- 3.14 ■ stressed the importance of the research conference and SC advised that all but two of the presenters had confirmed their attendance for September. ■ thought that the Museum's Historian, had done a good job and ■ advised that research and collections teams had worked hard to provide the content which had been viewed. ■ thought the online debates were a great platform and should be continued and be available to view afterwards and added that the PR and Comms team should help push this out on social media.
- 3.15 ■ hoped that the online conference would enable more international participation and that the team would review the audience reach post-conference. ■ suggested checking publishing dates to maintain academic rigor. ■ assured the Board there would be no double counting.
- 3.16 The Board thanked ■ for his report.

#### **ITEM 4 – FINANCE**

- 4.1 ■ advised that the Museum remained in reasonable financial shape. However, GIA represents 80% of our income this year due to the pandemic and without this support the Museum would be in a much more difficult position.
- 4.2 ■ advised that given the current situation there was financial uncertainty around RAFMEL and other self-generated income. However, the next few months should provide a clearer picture.

#### **Fundraising**

- 4.3 ■ acknowledged the creativity and diligence of the Development team in putting together new fundraising initiatives with a focus on revenue fundraising during the pandemic.
- 4.4 ■ thanked ■ for his report and a first class effort and advised that the Board looked forward to playing their part in support of the Museum.

**Action: ■ to circulate his presentation to the Board**

#### **ITEM 5 – RAFMEL BOARD**

- 5.1 ■ congratulated the Museum team on reopening and was glad to report that spend in the shop was doing well during the first week.
- 5.2 ■ advised that he was considering resilience within the RAFMEL Board and that new directors would be recruited next year.
- 5.3 ■ asked about the flow of visitors around Hendon and ■ advised that this work had been put in abeyance due to lockdown. However, ■ reported that reopening had provided the opportunity to trial moving the shop out further into the Sunderland area so that everyone passes through on exit. ■ suggested that the team continue to monitor the flow.

#### **ITEM 6 – AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

- 6.1 ■ advised that he had been impressed with the new internal auditors who were working across the three service museums.

- 6.2 ■ stated that the Cyber internal audit showed significant progress in the updated review, and internal financial controls had also been reviewed satisfactorily.
- 6.3 ■ asked how the committee decided on the topics for review and ■ advised that the leadership team propose those areas they feel would be useful for discussion with the Audit and Risk Committee, which then approves or otherwise. ■ reported that the historical list of subjects audited was available and that governance and risk would be covered this year. The topics are broad and deeper dives would be taken where helpful.
- 6.4 ■ asked that incident planning be finalised, particularly in relation to communications. ■ thanked ■ and ■ for the time they had spent working with the SLT and others to assist with crisis management and security planning and advised that the audit and risk committee would support the testing of incident response.

### **Annual Report and Accounts**

- 6.5 ■ reported that the external audit had been a challenge due to remote working but the final set of annual report and accounts have now been circulated and the Committee considered the Museum as a going concern and was content. ■ reported that the Museum's accounts were in good shape and there was no change in accounting standards this year. The Audit and Risk Committee recommended the annual report and accounts to the Board.
- 6.6 **Approved: The Board approved the 2019-20 Annual Report and Accounts**

### **Item 7 – DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

- 7.1 ■ advised that, having discussed the development strategy in the light of the pandemic, the Committee had concluded that fundamentally this would not change the strategy. However, the emphasis should shift so that the online Museum ensures we remain relevant given the changes brought about by the pandemic.
- 7.2 ■ advised that NLHF has agreed to extend the Museum's activities on Phase 2A of the Centenary Programme which means the Museum can support the salaries of the RAF Stories team for the next three months.
- 7.3 ■ reported that tenders were in for the groundworks on the Cosford play area; all are within budget and would enable delivery in time for October half term.

### **Item 8 – STAFFING AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

- 8.1 ■ congratulated ■ and her team for driving through training, paid staff and volunteer support, online payslips and other initiatives during lockdown.
- 8.2 ■ advised that this period had brought the Museum teams together and everyone has appreciated the support and communications. The Museum would be measuring its performance during the pandemic with a survey sent to all colleagues and will report back to the September meeting.
- 8.3 ■ advised that the staff and volunteer survey report was available at the link in the Board papers (or on request).

### **Pay Remit**

- 8.4 ■ advised that following the reduction in income due to COVID, the Committee recommended that there should be no pay increase this year but that it would be reviewed should financial performance improve.
- 8.5 ■ advised that the Museum had communicated the freeze on this year's pay increase with the Pay Negotiations Committee and the reasons behind it. The PNC had been generally supportive given the financial challenges and exceptional circumstances.

**Approved: The Board approved the 2020-21 pay remit**

#### **Item 9 – BOARD AWAY DAY AND BOARD EFFECTIVENESS QUESTIONNAIRE**

- 9.1 The Board meeting at Cosford on 28 September has been extended to include the away day. The away day will look at the make up of the Board, the way we act and do business and succession planning. The away day would also revisit the strategy but if there was anything Board members thought it should also spend time on then Trustees should notify ■ by 28 July.  
**Action: Board to notify ■ by 28 July of any other governance / high level items for discussion at the away day**

#### **Item 10 – BOARD PROGRAMME**

- 10.1 The next meeting is scheduled to be held at Cosford on Monday 28 September starting 11.00am with a short Board meeting followed by a facilitated away day. This will be reviewed nearer the time in line with government advice on COVID-19.

#### **Item 11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- 11.1 ■ noted that the Nominations and Governance Committee needed to meet to discuss the Royal Charter governance changes.  
**Action: ■ to arrange a Nominations and Governance Committee meeting in September**
- 11.2 ■ suggested the Board discuss fundraising ethics, which may be a further topic for the away day. ■ advised that the Museum follows a due diligence process for prospective donors and ■ reminded the Board that an ethics workshop was held ahead of the Centenary to guide fundraising for the programme.  
**Action: ■ to consider including fundraising ethics in the Board Away Day programme**