

**MINUTES OF THE 210<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF  
THE TRUSTEES OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM  
HELD VIA VIDEO CONFERENCE CALL  
ON MONDAY 14 DECEMBER 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)
	Ms Sarah Castle (Item 3 A&L report)	(SC)
	Ms Julie Brierley (Item 3 A&L report)	(JB)
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 meeting and advised that ■ was unavailable due to a family emergency but would join as soon as he could.
- 1.2 ■ reported that The Museum remains in a difficult position. The Cosford site is open but the areas around it are in Tier 3 meaning that there are very few visitors. London will probably be heading into Tier 3 and close within the next week.
- 1.3 ■ paid tribute to the Museum staff for their continuing flexibility and adaptability during COVID-19. The protocols in place on site are keeping everyone safe. However, the Museum’s finances, fundraising and plans have all been impacted.
- 1.4 There were no apologies for absence or conflicts of interest reported.

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

- 2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 28 September 2020 were approved.
- 2.2 (2.4) The final inspection report on the NCWE roof will be presented to the H&S Committee on 18 December – **closed**.
- 2.3 (3.4) A verbal report on the IT strategy was provided to the Development Committee – **closed**.
- 2.4 (3.7) ■■■ has included a dotted line to flag where digital engagement figures are not current – **closed**.
- 2.5 (5.3) ■■■ is preparing a session on the psychology of influence to be held with relevant colleagues in the spring - **closed**.
- 2.6 (5.6) A plan of action and timelines for RAFMEL initiatives is included in the papers for information (Item 6 Appendix 2) - **closed**.

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

#### **BP Monitor and KPI dashboard**

- 3.1 ■■■ advised that the BP Monitor at Appendix 1 was included with papers and covers Board level actions only.
- 3.2 ■■■ asked whether the Museum has a plan for 2021. ■■■ advised that the Business Plan and budgets are developed in parallel with visitor projections and the report will come to the next round of Committee meetings. ■■■ asked what steer had been given to those setting budgets. ■■■ reported that the budgets are based on 600k visitors next year which is 60% of expected numbers and the SLT have taken a cautious approach to budgets. ■■■ advised that the full year forecast for 20/21 remains at a £250k deficit despite the extended closure and should give confidence that the Museum can reduce its activity to manage its finances. ■■■ reported that visitor figures had been modelled from a worse case visitor figure of 540k to a best case of 700k. ■■■ confirmed that should London go into Tier 3 as expected, staff would be furloughed again. ■■■ asked if there is a simple marketing plan which could be shared with the Board, which encourages visitors to return to achieve the visitor figures. ■■■ outlined the benefits to morale with regards to topping up furloughed colleagues' salaries to 100% and how that had played out with Cosford and London achieving first and second place respectively across 44 ALVA attractions for their warm welcome back following the first lockdown.
- 3.3 ■■■ thought the increasing emphasis on online in the reports was impressive, especially the amount of content which Access and Learning have put online. ■■■ agreed, highlighting Collections Online.
- 3.4 ■■■ asked if the Museum had a view in terms of the future of Grant in Aid. ■■■ advised that there are no reductions expected this or the following year but agreed that there would be significant pressures on public funding going forward.
- 3.5 ■■■ advised that London appears to include ten times more accidents than Cosford. ■■■ reported that the data is very small and is more to do with the nature of the sites, also highlighting that the outdoor play area in London will add to the number. ■■■ asked that ■■■ look at what is making the statistics so much higher and the causes and ■■■ suggested benchmarking with similar venues. ■■■ advised that the statistic

could be due to the difference in reporting between those staff at Cosford and London.

**Action: ■ to include 12 month rolling average in future H&S statistical overviews.**

3.6 ■ reported that the minor communication oversight on the fire alarm has now been rectified and was due to a new member of staff who has now given further training.

3.7 ■ would like to see more 2021 information in the KPI charts and a breakdown of the forecast between Cosford and London with greater narrative covering what we are learning and what we are doing about it. ■ advised that the narrative is spread across the relevant areas in the Executive Report and that she will highlight them together in the future. ■ advised Age UK used only three high level KPIs; beneficiaries; money in; money out. ■ advised that he has discussed with the Museum on KPIs where the Museum benefits the RAF. ■ advised that the KPIs are aligned with the five key strategic priorities.

**Action: ■ to include top level KPIs and greater narrative in the papers for the March meeting**

3.8 Further to discussion on the H&S policy report which included technical updates and a list of responsible people, the Board asked that tracked change updates be provided in future. Following a question from ■ on the responsibility of staff to 'read' instructions ■ advised that when an employee starts at the Museum they are asked to read the H&S, safeguarding, etc, policies and confirmation is signed and returned to HR. ■ asked if there is a definitive list of policies and their line of approval and MA advised that there is. It has been to the Board previously and to Staffing and Remuneration Committee more recently with regards to HR policies. ■ suggested that if a member of staff leaves after undergoing training they should repay the amount. ■ advised that this is the case for higher cost developmental training programmes.

**Action: ■ to re-circulate policy approvals list to the Board.**

**Action: SLT to ensure changes are tracked in future policy updates**

**Action: ■ to include minimum first aid numbers in future reports.**

**Approved: The Board approved the H&S policy**

3.9 The annual A&L report and three short films were circulated to the Board ahead of the meeting. ■ congratulated ■ on their adaptability and flexibility in delivering online learning. Following a question on their thoughts on the post COVID-19 learning environment, ■ advised that the online offer would continue as it enables wider accessibility and reach. ■ reported that the Museum was ahead of the curve amongst museums, thanks in part to not furloughing staff at the first lockdown, which enabled the team to work collaboratively across departments to produce the online content. A hybrid model would be used going forward. ■ advised that all KPI targets for learners would include onsite, offsite and online engagement in future. ■ asked if the Museum was dependent on STEM volunteers for delivery of the STEM programme. ■ advised that the Museum trains volunteers to deliver the programme but are also able to deliver without them. However, ■ stressed the importance of volunteers as role models for young people. ■ advised that the Museum begins its STEM programme with Early Years children through to more formal learning with primary and secondary schools, then to conferences, career-based learning and the Year 10 STAAR programme. ■ was pleased that the pandemic had provided an opportunity to reach areas the Museum may not have done before and would like to see the A&L content repurposed on YouTube, etc, to reach the four nations and beyond. ■ also suggested including endorsements in online content. The Board congratulated the A&L team on a great year.

**Action: ■ will look at repurposing online content to reach out to the four nations and beyond**

#### **ITEM 4 – STAFFING AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

- 4.1 ■ reported that the SRC had interrogated the KPIs and are looking to provide a simplified dashboard which works for the Committee.
- 4.2 ■ applauded the Museum's achievement of first and second place on reopening reviews.
- 4.3 ■ advised that the Policy approvals list will be updated and reported back to SRC.
- 4.4 ■ and ■ had attended a one day whistleblowing training session.
- 4.5 The SRC is undertaking self-assessment to improve how they operate as a Committee. ■ asked if any other Trustees would be willing to join the SRC on the retirement of ■.

#### **ITEM 5 – DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

- 5.1 ■ advised that the DC had talked through the playground and the master plans and had reflected on the Museum's priority projects and programmes given the changing world.
- 5.2 ■ advised that the Cosford play area is now open and the fully publicised launch will probably now take place at Easter. Planning for the Resource Hub and activity plan contributes along with the collections review and resultant disposals. ■ reported that none of the items for disposal reach Board level in terms of financial value but there will be some discussion around the disposals and whether they are they appropriate.
- 5.3 ■ advised that in London the Control Room and rest area project is going well and that the IT and equipment for it will be moved and complete by the end of February.
- 5.4 All Board members had seen the London master plans in advance of the meeting and ■ advised that agreeing the footprint would enable the teams to develop the plans in more detail. ■ advised that the cost benefit analysis would be part of the next stage and a business case produced on each project for approval.  
**Approved: The Board agreed the London Master Plan footprint subject to future project-specific business cases.**
- 5.5 ■ talked through minor wording changes to the Strategy 2030 overview following post COVID-19 SLT discussions on the tone and direction of the Museum. It was agreed that Strategy 2030 discussions should be a matter for the whole Board and ■ agreed that where sub committees are making a recommendation a separate paper should be provided.  
**Approved: The Board approved the minor updates to the wording of Strategy 2030.**
- 5.6 ■ reported that the SLT had worked through the top 25 projects which would be essential to enabling Strategy 2030. The Development Committee had scrutinised the priorities which the SLT would now revisit with an outline timetable and investment suggestion to the DC and the main Board in March. ■ advised that each project would come back with a business plan and would be approved, or not, on its own merits. ■ advised that this is a menu dependent on finance, priorities,

and / or a key donor to support a project on the list. The SLT are prioritising in a systematic way but this is not yet the time for detailed costings. ■ advised that the weighting might change as the pressures of 2021 reveal themselves.

## **ITEM 6 – FINANCE COMMITTEE**

- 6.1 ■ reported a volatile financial position and the importance that the SLT and Finance Committee keep on top of the financial impact in the changing situation. The provision in the budget for another lockdown has already been used and another lockdown is now imminent. There is a significant reserve which is committed to development and may have to be diverted to keep the Museum on track. However, the Museum has a bid in to MOD and Treasury for funding. ■ reported that the biggest impact was on RAFMEL and he hoped that in the future they can contribute more as they are a critical part of Strategy 2030.
- 6.2 ■ noted that the Museum is forecasting an unrestricted deficit of £252k and asked if every contingency had been used. ■ reported that the closure and development contingencies had been used and that the £75k left in the CEO contingency has been earmarked for CCTV development which is a priority pending a decision in January. ■ highlighted the self generated income of £253k at Q2 moving to £1.1M at year end. ■ advised that self generated income includes fundraising initiatives which have happened slightly later in the year but which have now come online. ■ was pleased to report unrestricted funds to date of £500k.

## **ITEM 7 – AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

- 7.1 ■ advised that the Internal Auditors had started their work. The Committee reviewed the report on Events Management which had only picked up on documentation. All recommendations were accepted and will be implemented by the end of March. The Committee debated the final items on this year's audit and areas for next year and agreed that the strategic risk mitigations would be tested this year.
- 7.2 PB reported that the Head of IT had updated the Committee on cyber security and there were just a couple of items outstanding on two factor authentication which are now going live and the full disaster recovery plan will happen in Q1. ■ reported that cyber security at the Museum has made enormous strides forward.
- 7.3 The AR Committee had looked at the Corporate Risk Register and was happy with the robust mitigations. One additional risk has been added around Board appointments.

**Approval: The Board approved the strategic risk register**

## **ITEM 8 – RAFMEL BOARD**

- 8.1 ■ advised that RAFMEL commercial performance had been looked at in depth and a paper circulated. Lessons learned during the COVID-19 period will stand RAFMEL in good stead and digital activity has performed well. Virtual events have been a great success and are being followed up with further events and the online shop has had its best two months in its history.
- 8.2 On the positive side, ■ reported that when the Museum did reopen visitors were quick to return. The UK domestic visitor is vital to the Museum and part of why the word 'entertain' should be included in Strategy 2030. ■ advised that the Museum will therefore be focussing its efforts on developing the domestic market.

8.3 ■ reported that RAFMEL and the Board work against a challenging backdrop with a lack of predictability on recovery.

8.4 ■ advised that five members of RAFMEL would be leaving in the summer. RAFMEL had discussed the make up of the Board and a job description and advert are now live to recruit four new Board members.

#### **ITEM 9 – NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

9.1 ■ reported that Board recruitment is still with the MOD. They have not yet submitted the reappointments to the SoS and the recruitment is unlikely to go live until the New Year.

9.2 **Action: ■ to circulate the advert to Board members when the link is available.**

#### **ITEM 10 – BOARD PROGRAMME 2021**

10.1 **Action: ■ to include an away day in the Board programme**

10.2 ■ suggested rag rating agendas and including cover sheets to clarify whether papers were for information, discussion or a recommendation to help signpost where Board efforts should go. The current agenda format / structure was adopted from the CASS business school external governance review but ■ asked ■ to share examples with her to further improve the meeting content.

#### **Item 11 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

11.1 The next meeting is scheduled for Monday 29 March at the London site.