



**MINUTES OF THE 216th MEETING OF
THE TRUSTEES OF THE ROYAL AIR FORCE MUSEUM
HELD AT THE LONDON SITE IN PERSON ON MONDAY 4 JULY 2022**

Present:	Sir Stephen Hillier (Chair)	(SSH)
	Ms Maggie Appleton (CEO)	(MA)
	Mr John Banks	(JB)
	Ms Laurie Benson (online)	(LB)
	Dr Carol Cole	(CC)
	Mr David Cooper	(DC)
	Dr Rodney Eastwood	(RE)
	Mr Jonathan Field	(JF)
	Mr Matthew Gilpin	(MG)
	Mr Waseem Mahmood	(WM)
	Ms Julie McGarvey	(JM)
	AM Peter Ruddock	(PR)
	Mr Nick Sanders	(NS)
In attendance:	AVM Simon Edwards (RAF Representative)	(SE)
	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) (online)	(KW)
	Mr Sebastian Cox (Chair, Academic Research Board) (Item 6)	(SC)
	Mr Peter Johnston (Head of Collections) (Item 6)	(PJ)
	Mr Adam Shepherd (Head of Collections Services) (Item 6)	(AS)
Minutes:	Mrs Vanessa White (PA to the CEO)	(VW)

A Trustee / CEO only session took place ahead of the full meeting.

ITEM 1 – CHAIR’S OPENING REMARKS / APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE / CONFLICTS OF INTEREST / NOTIFICATION OF ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 1.1 [REDACTED] welcomed everyone to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies for absence were received.
- 1.3 There were no conflicts of interest reported.
- 1.4 [REDACTED] highlighted that the annual report and accounts and the strategy, both of which had previously been circulated, would be discussed for approval later in the meeting
- 1.5 [REDACTED] commented on the current higher risk environment due to inflationary pressures.

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

- 2.1 The minutes of the Board meeting held on 21 March 2022 were approved.

- 2.2 The Board was content to remove the completed actions from the action log.

ITEM 3 – GOVERNANCE MATTERS

Governance Review Reflections

- 3.1 The Board discussed potential priorities and agreed the following:
- Whilst formal accountabilities rested with specific individuals, Trustees would adopt a unitary-Board style approach in relation to discharging their responsibilities
 - Greater understanding was required on the difference between Trustee and SLT Board roles, including through Board induction.
 - Extending the Board-only section of the meeting to 30 minutes and inviting the CEO (which had commenced at this meeting).
- 3.2 ■ suggested testing reciprocal Board/SLT assumptions and expectations at the next review.
- 3.3 It was agreed that the Nominations and Governance Committee would discuss the matter further and report back to the Board.
Action: Add governance priorities to the NGC Committee programme
- 3.4 The Chair recommended light touch Board training to ensure ongoing development and he would arrange to meet with Trustees individually for half an hour every six months. It was agreed to appoint a Deputy Chair and to look to diversify the Board. ■ suggested that, notwithstanding the current needs, in future the size of the Board should be reduced.
Action: ■ to progress periodic meetings with Trustees and appointment of a Deputy Chair; and discuss Board training through the NGC.
- 3.5 ■ suggested standardising the format for all terms of reference for Committees.
Action: ■ to standardise the format for all TOR.
- 3.6 The Board discussed the role of a Board Secretary / Head of Governance.
Action: NGC to investigate a Board Secretary role and look at a cost benefit analysis for further discussion at a future Board meeting.
- 3.7 Following a discussion on Board management software, ■ advised that he would be in favour of using BoardEffect as recommended in the paper. ■ was reassured that other Board software options had been considered. ■ advised that the IT team would be happy to assist Board members with the introduction.
Agreed: It was agreed that all Board papers would be shared on the new portal by the September meeting. ■ to trial with test papers ahead of the September meeting.

Nominations and Governance Committee Terms of Reference

- 3.8 **Approved: The Board approved the NGC TORs subject to a typo in para 4.1**
RAFM Ethics Advisory Group TOR
- 3.9 **Action: Committee TOR format to be standardised**

Strategy 2030 update

- 3.10 **Approved: The Board approved the previously circulated updates to Strategy 2030**

ITEM 4 – Trustees Annual Report and Financial Statements

- 4.1 [REDACTED] advised that the narrative of the Annual Report had been interrogated by the sub-committees. Both commended the report to the Board.
- 4.2 [REDACTED] advised that NAO presented an interim audit completion report at the ARC meeting and just prior to the Board meeting he had received an audit approval update from the NAO, without qualification. NAO are content that signature could go ahead today. Prior to C&AG certification they will circulate the final Audit Completion Report to confirm post-quality review audit findings and allow laying before Parliament within the pre-recess timetable. [REDACTED] congratulated the Museum team. [REDACTED] advised that the internal auditors had also congratulated the team on an extremely clean audit.
- Approved: The Board approved the Annual Report and Financial Statements and Letter of Representation for signing.**
- Action: [REDACTED] to circulate the final NAO audit completion report to ARC (and [REDACTED] for information) when available**
- 4.3 [REDACTED] thanked [REDACTED] and her team for their work to bring the audit work to completion.

Q4 Finance Report

- 4.4 There were no questions or issues raised.

S2030 Financial Framework

- 4.5 [REDACTED] advised that the Financial Framework was created to give reassurance to the Board and advised that the Framework is a live document. Of the four scenarios reported in the previously circulated Framework, the Museum is working to scenario one. However, given the current financial climate the figures could change.
- 4.6 [REDACTED] highlighted the key assumptions. [REDACTED] asked if the Museum had factored in a recession and a cut in GIA and [REDACTED] reported that the figures had been stress tested in detail and seen by FRC with an overview shared with the full Board. [REDACTED] was content with the approach and commended the Framework. [REDACTED] suggested a pragmatic approach with decisions made at each step. [REDACTED] reassured the Board that, if the NLHF bid was successful, no spade would go in the soil until the money was in place, removing the financial risk. [REDACTED] thought the biggest risk to delivery would be fundraising but that plans would be adapted to fit the budget.
- 4.7 [REDACTED] highlighted the appendices which provided more detail.
- 4.8 [REDACTED] advised that given the current uncertain environment he would like to revisit the Financial Framework at each Board meeting. He commented on the importance of knowing what the pressures are which might affect the Museum's ability to function successfully, including visitor numbers, inflationary pressures, GIA. Separately, it was important to understand the Museum's ambition and have clarity on what and when the Museum would need to commit to aspects of the project and what the off ramps would be.

Action: [REDACTED] to bring the Financial Framework to each Board meeting

ITEM 5 – PAY REMIT UPDATE

- 5.1 MA advised that the SRC was recommending the way forward outlined in the circulated paper on the Pay Remit following consultation with staff and union representatives.
- 5.2 Following discussion, the Board supported the SRC recommendation.

ITEM 6 – COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH ANNUAL UPDATE

- 6.1 [REDACTED] welcomed [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] to the meeting.
- 6.2 [REDACTED] presented the collections highlights, key statistics and activities. He highlighted the importance of Museum Accreditation, becoming a centre for excellence and revision of the collections development policy and collections information programme. The collections policy and information help to diversify the Museum's collections to better reflect national, international, and local communities.
- 6.3 [REDACTED] asked where [REDACTED] thought the KPIs should be pushed. [REDACTED] thought the limitations on the reading room and growing research programmes were key areas. Having the inventory online now is assisting with promoting research and active measures are being taken to grow it.
- 6.4 [REDACTED] advised that acquisitions and transfers enable the Museum to display more relevant items. The process is continual and enables better focus. He highlighted recent acquisitions which acted as a springboard out to share stories.
- 6.5 Research and reach are assisted by the Museum's call for papers for its annual conference which, this year, is entitled: Meaning, Memory, and the (Mis)Remembered Past. [REDACTED] the Museum's Historian has recently published a book, Air Power and the Evacuation of Dunkirk and [REDACTED] had recently been involved in the Lancaster at 80 programme available on All 4 television channel. [REDACTED] also highlighted the digitisation of the collections and online digital presence which function as a hook to bring visitors in and the growth of the RAF Stories website.
- 6.6 [REDACTED] commented that she would like the Museum to expand its digital platforms. [REDACTED] advised that he relished the opportunity to share stories on other platforms and that PR and Comms would lead on this.
- 6.7 [REDACTED] asked how regularly objects were rotated. [REDACTED] advised that the approach to new exhibitions would bring more of the collection out on display, as would further digitisation and loans to other institutions which ensure collections are seen by a greater audience. [REDACTED] commented that display potential is one of the questions asked when collecting. In response to a question from [REDACTED] on progress with collections digitisation, [REDACTED] advised that the team is working towards the ambitious target of 5,000 items by the end of the reporting year.
- 6.8 [REDACTED] thanked [REDACTED] for his presentation and suggested the Museum link in with the RAF for those items missing from the collection. This was supported by [REDACTED], who offered to help enable.

Action: [REDACTED] to discuss access to current RAF history with [REDACTED].

- 6.9 [REDACTED] advised that the Research Advisory Board is assisting the team with Interwar and Bomber Command advice. There is a spread of expertise across the Research Board, which also looks at disposals and makes suggestions. The Advisory Board also considers conference themes and structure.
- 6.10 [REDACTED] reported that the Midlands Programme would make links with RAF stories in the Midlands area. [REDACTED] advised that the Museum is about to sign an MOU with the Telford and Wrekin Interfaith Council and highlighted the Hidden Heroes stories which would be covered in the Midlands. Sharing the contemporary story is also an important way to connect with diverse communities.
- 6.13 [REDACTED] advised that, for the next Board meeting, he would like to see an update of how the Museum is practically fulfilling the Museum's Strategy 2030 ambitions around diversity.
Action: SLT to update the September Board meeting on how the Museum intends to operationalise its Strategy 2030 diversity ambitions.

ITEM 7 – RAFMAF MOU

- 7.1 SSH introduced a short video by [REDACTED].
- 7.2 In his video [REDACTED] highlighted the funds raised by RAFMAF and the two scaled down events to present the RAFMAF swords to USAF / RAF exchange officers during the pandemic. The guest of honour to the Gala Dinner this year would be Nicholas Patrick, NASA space shuttle pilot on the International Space Station.
- 7.3 [REDACTED] advised that the MOU document presented to the Board covers what works best for both organisations.
- 7.4 **Approval: The Board was content to sign the MOU with an accompanying letter which reflects the supportive nature of RAFMAF and recognises their good work.**

ITEM 8 – EXECUTIVE REPORT

- 8.1 [REDACTED] advised that Q1 is reporting on target at London but slightly below projected visitor numbers at Cosford, though is on target with commercial income.
- 8.2 [REDACTED] highlighted the challenges around fundraising and recruitment.
- 8.3 [REDACTED] reported that she and [REDACTED] had met with the Museum's leads on achieving Dementia Friendly Charter status at its London site for an update. She was delighted to report that the Museum had learned of its success the previous week.
- 8.4 [REDACTED] suggested sharing the Business Plan with fewer columns included in future.
- 8.5 [REDACTED] advised that there had been a natural reduction back to pre-Covid levels with regards to website views and social media engagement.

ITEM 9 – HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

- 9.1 [REDACTED] asked if [REDACTED] felt that a strong health and safety culture was still in evidence. [REDACTED] advised that post-Covid it had taken more effort to retrain and re-induct staff, who are in a different psychological space to pre-Covid.

- 9.2 ■ asked to see a three year rolling programme. ■ advised that the statistics were previously collated via a paper system but are now being collected online and would be available as soon as there is the longitudinal data.
- 9.3 ■ advised that a H&S audit had recently taken place and would be reported to the next ARC meeting. ■ suggested that benchmarking would be useful. ■ advised that the qualitative data from the audit should provide the reassurance needed.

ITEM 10 – REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES AND ASSOCIATED BODIES

Finance and Resources (FRC)

- 10.1 The FRC summary was previously circulated. There were no questions.

Major Projects and Programmes (MPPC)

- 10.2 KW advised that the Museum is on track to submit the delivery phase of the NLHF bid.

Audit and Risk

- 10.3 The ARC summary was previously circulated, and RE advised that there would be a November audit of the sustainability programme to enable progress towards Carbon Net Zero.

RAFMEI

- 10.4 ■ advised that the wayfinding project would start on Thursday. The project is in three stages and will report back to the September Board.
- 10.5 ■ advised that a social media strategy is in development.

ITEM 11 – BOARD GOVERNANCE

- 11.1 The Board discussed the Ethics Group Terms of Reference. It is not a formal committee of the Board, but the TOR will be updated in line with those of Committees. The Board agreed the need for agility in decision making in this area and were content that email agreement to donation proposals would be acceptable.
Action: ■ to update the TOR and Board programme.
- 11.2 ■ suggested that fundraising should report quarterly to the Board. ■ suggested that SLT expand the fundraising section of the executive report with clear data about whether the Museum is on track. The annual fundraising report to the Board would continue.
Action: ■ to expand the fundraising section of the Executive Report

ITEM 12 – BOARD PROGRAMME / REFLECTIONS ON THE MEETING

- 12.1 The Board was content with the programme.

ITEM 13 – ANY OTHER BUSINESS / NEXT MEETING

- 13.1 The next meeting is scheduled for 19 September 2022, in the Conference Room at Cosford starting with a half hour 'meet the team'.