

## **HORNIMAN PUBLIC MUSEUM AND PUBLIC PARK TRUST**

The Minutes of the Board meeting of the Horniman Public Museum and Public Park Trust held on Wednesday 1 July 2020 at the Horniman Museum and Gardens.

*This meeting was held virtually via Zoom conferencing.*

### **Present**

Eve Salomon  
Caroline Cole  
Geoff Crossick  
Bunt Ghosh  
Simon Hesketh  
Nico Iacuzzi

Sarah Kemp  
Clare Matterson  
Mayowa Ochere  
Carole Souter  
Helen Williams

Nick Merriman (Chief Executive)  
Paula Thomas (Board Secretary, Finance Director)  
Victoria Pinnington (Director, Communications and Income Generation)  
Kirsten Walker (Director, Collections Care and Estates)  
Mirka Kotulicova (Relationship Manager, Arts Council England)  
Nick Budden (Marketing Manager) agenda item

### **1. Closed session**

The executives joined the meeting after this item.

### **2. Apologies for absence and conflicts of interest**

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

There were no apologies and no conflicts of interest were declared.

### **3. Minutes of the previous Board meeting and matters arising**

3.1. The minutes of the Board meeting of 20 May 2020 were agreed as a true record.

3.2. Matters arising and action points

There were no matters arising or action points not covered by the agenda.

### **4. Management Report**

The CEO gave an update on the latest situation:

Much of the time the senior management team have been working on return to work (RTW) and re-opening plans. Staff have been continuing to work unless furloughed. The areas previously managed by Tim Corum have now been taken over by the CEO, who is now getting to know the area better. It has been renamed the Directorate of Content and one of the aims is to get

them working better together as an integrated team. A lot of good work has been going on working with community partners in Lewisham who are delivering food parcels to include activity sheets and other useful information. The Hair project is progressing well and a Community Fieldworker has been brought in to recruit researchers to share stories about hair. Work is also continuing on the restitution and decolonisation projects.

Now that re-opening plans are underway we are keen to set a re-set agenda with the following priorities:

1. Consulting/listening to different communities
2. Acknowledging and sharing the full story of the Horniman's history. The website entry has already been changed to reflect the colonial context and there are plans to change the panels in the galleries.
3. De-colonising our collections history by undertaking projects like the 'Rethinking Relationships' work on African material.
4. Engaging audiences through more diverse programming.
5. Increasing our resources for Digital engagement.
6. Diversifying our audiences
7. Diversifying our staff and volunteers.
8. Accelerating our climate and ecology agenda.

Working groups will be set up for each of these with an overall Re-Set Agenda working group chaired by the CEO.

### **Dashboard and Management accounts**

Trustees reviewed these documents and noted that the organisation was doing well until the Coronavirus pandemic hit. Without this, targets would have been exceeded at all levels. The results are really positive and put the Horniman in a strong position going forward.

### **Staff return to work**

The Director, Collections Care and Estates reported the plans under this area:

RTW forms were sent out to all staff to find out any issues or concerns they had about returning to work on site. These mostly related to childcare, health of themselves and family members and public transport. A number of measures have been put in place to support staff where possible e.g. keeping on furlough for a little longer. A summary document has been prepared of the concerns and measures taken and will be sent out to all staff for reassurance. A detailed risk assessment has been carried out and an action plan put together and these have been issued to all staff together with some RTW guidance. These documents have also been shared with the union and their comments taken on board. Staff who can continue to work from home will be encouraged to do so. There will be a phased return across the organisation. The Exhibitions and Conservation teams are now back and the Collections Management, Cleaning, Security, Estates and Gardens teams have increased their time on site. Some members of CIG have also been onsite to begin preparations for re-opening.

Hands-on objects have been looked at in the Galleries and ways of dealing with them are being considered. Maintenance work is also being carried out in the Galleries to take advantage of the closure period.

## 5. Preparations for reopening

The Director, Communications and Income Generation reported on plans under this area:

The key message is that the Horniman has always been open in some form and that there is a phased re-opening of other areas:

- Gardens,
- Gardens toilets,
- Market,
- Café Kiosk,
- Plonk Golf,
- Animal Walk and Café,

The date for reopening the main Museum has not yet been finalised but will be either 30 July or 6 August. The main issues are around staffing and finishing off maintenance works.

The Butterfly House and Aquarium will be re-opened at a later date as there are still issues to be resolved about opening safely.

Entry will be by timed-ticket which must be booked in advance. The current plan is to have 30 minute slots admitting 50 visitors. This is rather cautious but can be adjusted quickly if necessary. There will be a one-way route through the Museum with exit through the Education Centre. The main shop is being moved temporarily to the Education Centre to provide a space for buggies.

This will mean that visitors need to exit via the shop which will be an interesting experiment.

Front line staff will be provided with visors and Perspex screens will be put up at the tills and information desk for protection. Visitors will be encouraged to wear face coverings.

Visit Britain have launched a 'We're Good to Go' industry standard and consumer mark to reassure customers that a business adheres to Government and public health guidance. It is a self-assessment tool which we are working towards having it in place for when we re-open.

It was confirmed that social distancing arrangements are in place at the Farmers Market. There is signage up and markers on the floor. Stall holders have face coverings and Perspex screens. The market was re-started with just a few stall holders and is being gradually built up.

There was a general discussion regarding the wearing of face coverings by staff and visitors. Some thought that they should be compulsory for all staff, in addition to the visors, as well a requirement for visitors. Whilst management acknowledged the need to create a safe environment for both visitors and staff there was concern that the requirement for face coverings gave a contrary message. The Horniman is following DCMS/NMDC guidance and is in line with the plans of the majority of other museums and visitor attractions. Visitor expectations need to be considered and the situation locally, at the same time as being vigilant and responsible. If visitors are required to wear face coverings this would need to be enforced which would be difficult, especially given our young audience.

Nonetheless, in order to best manage the risks to staff and visitors, Trustees recommended that staff wear both face coverings and visors and that visitors be recommended to wear face coverings but noted that the decision would be left to the senior management team who would be closely monitoring the changing situation and best practice.

## **6. Furlough update**

The Finance Director reported on use of the Job Retention Scheme to date and further plans to furlough staff:

It was noted that it was important to make sure that we are following employment law and management confirmed that our employment law lawyers were being consulted at every stage.

## **7. Framework update**

The CEO provided an update of the Framework plans:

We were in a good position prior to lockdown but now everything has been put on hold. The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) bid was not accepted and this stance is being held until October. It is also assumed that other capital funds will be harder to come by.

The original plans were driven by the pressure on the huge number of visitors and income generation. Now that it is likely that there will considerably fewer visitors in the short/medium term and that they will have less money to spend, this is less important. Priorities have also expanded to include considering our colonial legacy and accelerating our audience and staff diversity and our work on the climate change agenda.

Further work needs to be done on the revised priorities and what can be achieved with the resources available.

Trustees also questioned whether there was any need to rush into any capital spend at this point and it was agreed that there was no particular deadline now that it looked like the Entrance wouldn't be an issue for some time. Other priorities (decolonization, audience diversity) are low spend as they are best addressed through programming.

It was suggested that some projects could be worked up further so that they could be started once funding became available. In particular Phase 1 of the Entrance works, which provides modernisation of some facilities and increases income generation opportunities, could be developed.

It was agreed that there should be a focus on the non-capital aspects of the plan e.g. programming, diversification of audiences, increasing income, over any capital spend. There will be a fuller discussion about revising the Framework at the AwayDay in October.

## **8. Risk Register**

The risk register was reviewed by the Board who made the following comments:

- B9 – relating to capital projects. It was suggested that this risk could be reduced given the discussion under the previous agenda item.
- It would be good to include a risk around a second wave/micro peaks locally.
- Will training be given to staff prior to re-opening, to cover changes in H&S, fire exits etc? It was noted that detailed risk registers relating to RTW had been sent to Audit Committee and such details of training and cleaning regimes were included.
- Colonisation – internal/staff messaging needs to be considered as well as external. This is being included in the re-set plans.

## **9. Audit Committee**

### *9.1 Audit Committee Annual Report*

The Audit Committee's Annual Report was commended to the meeting. This summarised the Committee's work for the year and recommended acceptance of the financial statements to the Board, based on its own consideration of the financial statements, internal audit findings, the audit report issued by the external auditors, which indicates an unqualified audit opinion, and other sources of assurance.

The Board considered the procedures in place to give trustees confidence that they have fulfilled their statutory duty of disclosure to the Auditors and agreed that the letter of representation to the Auditors should be signed on behalf of the Board by the Chair and Accounting Officer.

### *9.2 Minutes of meeting of 9 June 2020*

The Chair of the Audit Committee presented the minutes of the last meeting which had included receipt of both the internal and external auditors' annual reports.

### *9.3 Reserves Policy 2020*

The Board reviewed and approved the Reserves Policy, which had been considered and recommended by the Audit Committee.

### *9.4 Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements*

The Board approved the Annual Report and Consolidated Financial Statements and authorised them to be signed on their behalf.

### *9.5 Health & Safety Report*

The excellent Health and Safety Annual Report was noted by the Board.

## **10. Capital Projects Board**

### *10.1 Minutes of the meeting on 3 June 2020*

Caroline Cole presented the minutes of the last meeting and was pleased to report that the Butterfly House floor now seems to be stable. Other than the North Hall Boiler/Energy Centre project, there are no significant projects currently and the CPB focused on the priority of various smaller scale projects.

### *10.2 Capital Budget*

Management reported that the capital budget had been revised following the successful allocation of £200k funding by DCMS for critical maintenance. Most of the costs were only indicative at this stage and the budget will be updated when the projects have been worked up further. It was noted however that building costs are generally coming in above pre-COVID-19 estimates and that this had been seen in the recent North Hall Boiler tenders which had come in above budget. There will therefore need to be some adjustment to the Capital Budget once costs are more accurately known.

## **11. Visitor Survey**

*(Nick Budden joined the meeting for this item).*

The Marketing Manager gave a presentation on the results of the Visitor Survey focusing more on longer term trends.

The following matters were discussed/highlighted:

- Visitor numbers continued to increase month on month and year on year until lockdown, with a similar pattern each year largely governed by school holidays and the weather.
- The number of under 16's has decreased over the years with a corresponding increase in the 25-34 age group. There is no obvious reason for this.
- The frequency of repeat visits is very high with 35k visitors accounting for approximately 50% of all visits. Trustees commented that this was concerning.
- There has been little progress on increasing the ethnicity of the audience which has remained fairly steady over the last few years. There has also been little progress on the socio-economic groups. Both of these statistics are concerning. There is a need to look at the barriers and how they can be reduced especially as the local BAME figure is c 50%. Management confirmed that this was an area that will be focused on as part of the re-set agenda and would also include looking at measures to increase staff diversity. It was suggested that community groups from the BAME community be given personalised invitations to the reopening of the Museum as these had been particularly affected by COVID-19 and might be more reluctant to visit.
- Visitor rating is overall positive but there has been a drift from 'great' to 'good'. A similar result has been shown by other museums and galleries using the same researchers.

## **12. Annual monitoring reports**

The Board received and noted the reports for 2019/20 monitoring workforce data.

It was noted that staff numbers had increased from last year due to the engagement of some staff for particular projects but also the filling of outstanding vacancies.

The reduction in staff diversity was of concern although it was noted that with a small number of staff, a reduction in one made a lot of difference to the statistics. Recruitment practices are being reviewed and in particular the widening of the network for advertising vacancies.

The lack of diversity at senior and board level was acknowledged but it was agreed that this couldn't be changed quickly.

It was noted that the diversity of volunteers was better, which, whilst good, needed to be reflected as well in permanent staff.

### **13. Horniman Museum Enterprises**

The annual review was presented by Nico

The shop had a good year and the success of Lego sales during the Brick Wonders exhibition showed the importance of being able to link products with exhibitions. Important actions for this year are the review of the Café operation and the retendering of the catering supplier.

### **14. AOB**

There was no other business.

### **15. Dates of future meetings**

10am 4 September 2020

9.30am – 5pm Away day 14 October 2020

1pm 10 December 2020

<b>Minutes ref:</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Date due</b>	<b>Who by</b>	<b>Progress</b>
b/f	Training on repatriation and decolonisation issues to be arranged for trustees	Sept 20	NM	done