

HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

MEETING OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Tower of London Wednesday 30th November 2005

Minutes

Present: Lord Inge (Acting Chairman)
Bridget Cherry
John Hamer
Angela Heylin
Malcolm Reading
Alan Reid
Sir Hugh Roberts

Apologies: Sir Roger Wheeler

In attendance: Michael Day - Chief Executive
Alyson Lawton - Trust and Company Secretary
John Barnes - Conservation Director
Sally O'Neill - Finance Director
Danny Homan - Director of Communications and Development

1. Chairman's Comments

1.1 The Chief Executive reported progress on the selection of a new chairman. The Sift Panel would meet on 7th December to discuss the long list of potential candidates. The short-listed candidates would be invited for interview in February.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

2.1 The minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 28th September 2005 were approved.

3. Matters Arising

3.1 There were no matters arising.

4. The Development Council

4.1 The Board noted the contents of the report. The Chairman of the Development Council summarised the highlights of the report and gave an update on recent developments together with remaining targets to raise.

4.2 A fundraising development event on 30th January 2006 would be held at Kensington Palace concentrating on corporate donors. She hoped that as many Trustees would be able to attend as possible to support the event, where the main appeal would be for Kew Palace but with a secondary message that Historic Royal Palaces is a charity and needs funding.

4.3 She also repeated her request for Trustees to continue to propose names for potential members of the Development Council.

5. **The Chief Executive's Report**

- 5.1 The Board noted the contents of the Chief Executive's report and especially:
- The decision to concentrate on promoting our new membership scheme, when the current Gift Aid rules on admissions change in April 2006. Trustees noted that the change in rules would result in a significant loss in income and were concerned that this approach might not minimise the net loss. The Chief Executive explained that this decision had been reached after a careful review of all the options and that a strong membership scheme (with associated Gift Aid) in the long term would better serve Historic Royal Palaces. Trustees asked the Chief Executive to monitor the net impact on a palace by palace basis and report back on progress in due course.
 - That the Chief Executive was proposing to make a submission in January to the inquiry into the heritage sector by Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee setting out the key issues for Historic Royal Palaces. A discussion took place about Historic Royal Palaces' policy for the Olympics. The Chief Executive explained that the legacy of the Olympics for young people matched closely Historic Royal Palaces' ambitions and that he had been invited to the DCMS to discuss the Olympics cultural programme along with other sponsored bodies.
 - Trustees asked the Chief Executive to convey their thanks to all staff who were involved in staging the European Heads of Government and State meeting at Hampton Court Palace which, operationally, had been an unqualified success.

5. **The Audit Committee**

- 5.1 The Chairman of the Audit Committee reported on the recent Audit committee and noted the hard work by the Executive Team on revising the Risk Register. However, the Audit Committee felt that there was further work to do in simplifying the layout.

5.2 The Audit Committee was concerned that a number of internal audit recommendations which had been outstanding for a long time had been removed from the reporting without sufficient explanation given to the Audit Committee. The Chairman of the Committee also noted that in the past, discussions took place with the Audit Committee before audits were removed from the programme but that audits had now been postponed without reference. The Chief Executive apologised that this had happened and undertook to ensure that any change in future priorities would come to the Audit Committee. The full minutes of the Audit Committee would be included in the papers for the February Trustees' Meeting.

6. Financial Performance

6.1 The Board noted the contents of the Finance Director's report.

7. Kew Palace

7.1 The Board noted the contents of the report and that the project was on time and within cost. The Conservation Director reported that there were no issues to report and that the team was now focussing on the detail of planning after the project completes and before the Palace opens to the public.

8. The Clore Learning Centre

8.1 The Board noted the contents of the report and that the main works would start on site next week. John Hamer and Malcolm Reading would be attending a briefing meeting on 21st December to understand the project more fully.

9. Pensions

9.1 The Board noted the Finance Director's report. In the discussion, the Board felt that it was not their role to endorse the investment strategy since this was a matter for the Pensions Trustees but endorsed the approach on the other matters. Trustees asked the Chief Executive to consider whether in view of the additional requirements of the new Pension rules, the number of non-executive specialists might be increased and also to consider whether the benefits of the group personal pension were sufficiently competitive as a package for staff and to continue the good efforts to market the GPP scheme to those eligible to join. The Board authorised the Acting Chairman and the Chief Executive to sign the Trust Deed containing the changes and the application of the seal.

10. The Visual Identity

10.1 The Communications and Development Director gave a presentation on the visual identity, following the earlier circulation of the completed Brand Book. The Acting Chairman thanked him and his team for the hard work that they had put into this project to date and asked Trustees individually to comment on the work and to highlight specific areas which might be a concern. A range of comments were made including the following:

- Whilst there was recognition that Historic Royal Palaces needed an overall linking device for the five sites, it was important that the individual palace names were not changed.
- The device should work in all media.
- It was important that there was a clear definition of when the “Historic Royal” linking device was used and that this should be very carefully policed within the organisation.
- The appellation of the “Historic Royal” linking device to the Palace name could give the impression that there has been change of name for the individual palaces.
- An endorsement of the principle of improving the graphics and the visuals used and that this was generally a good scheme.
- A concern for the use of the device in certain circumstances on the writing paper.

While commending the overall approach in the project, the Acting Chairman concluded that the Board could not agree to the use of the “Historic Royal” linking device as presented. After discussing a number of options, the Board asked the Chief Executive to re-present the work to them by amending the linking device to “Historic Royal Palaces”. It was agreed that the Acting Chairman would personally review the revisions and then seek the views of his fellow Trustees, so that the matter could be resolved and the new identity implemented as quickly as possible.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 There was no other business.

13. Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 1st February 2005