



Historic Royal Palaces is the charity that looks after

Tower of London
Hampton Court Palace
Banqueting House
Kensington Palace
Kew Palace
Hillsborough Castle

We help everyone explore the story of how monarchs and people have shaped society, in some of the greatest palaces ever built

We raise all our own funds and depend on the support of our visitors, members, donors, sponsors and volunteers.

Minutes

Meeting name: **Board of Trustees**

Date of meeting: **Wednesday 17 May 2017**

Location: **Kensington Palace**

Attendees: Rupert Gavin (Chairman)
Sir David Cannadine (Deputy Chairman)*
Zeinab Badawi
Bruce Carnegie-Brown
Liz Cleaver
General Sir Nicholas Houghton
Jonathan Marsden
Carole Souter
Louise Wilson*
* *via videoconference*

In attendance: Michael Day
John Barnes
Sue Hall
Graham Josephs
Rachael Gilleard
Jane Bettany (observing)
Nikolai Segura (item 4)

Apologies: Ajay Chowdhury
Jane Kennedy
Sir Michael Stevens

1. Opening business

- 1.1 The Chairman welcomed Trustees to the meeting and explained that Sir David Cannadine and Louise Wilson would join from item 4. Jane Bettany was welcomed to the meeting as an observer.
- 1.2 Apologies were noted from Ajay Chowdhury, Jane Kennedy and Sir Michael Stevens.
- 1.3 No conflicts of interest were declared.
- 1.4 The minutes of the last meeting were approved and the progress of actions noted.

2. Monitoring performance

2.1 *Chief Executive's monthly reports*

From the April report, Michael Day drew Trustees' attention to the record number of visits over the Easter period including HRP's best ever Bank Holiday weekend. From the May report he noted that HRP had acquired a Rothesay hunting suit worn by The Duke of Windsor, and that THR The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall had visited Hillsborough Castle, which afforded the opportunity to demonstrate the progress of the project.



The Chairman reported that the Chair of the Fundraising Regulator had written to him on the subject of the fundraising levy. After detailed discussion, Trustees decided that HRP will pay the levy on the basis of fundraising as shown in the 2016/17 Annual Report and Accounts, accompanied by a letter from the Chairman.

With regard to the major projects report, Carole Souter noted the disappointing performance of the supplier of the interactive exhibits for 'Armouries in Action' in the White Tower, and that this was not wholly in HRP's control. Jonathan Marsden asked whether there had been any further repercussions from the inaccurate reporting of the Kensington Palace Orangery New Wing; Michael Day explained that HRP had been working very closely with the Royal Household to manage the situation. Michael Day reported that work had commenced on building the car park at Hillsborough Castle.

2.2 *Report on financial performance*

Sue Hall reported that there was a £5.7m surplus at the end of the financial year 2016/17, which was better than had been previously forecast.

Bruce Carnegie-Brown questioned the quality of the visitor experience with such high volumes of people, and Sir Nick Houghton asked whether there was a point at which it was considered appropriate to focus on yield rather than visit numbers. In response, Michael Day explained that this issue is given a great deal of consideration throughout the year, but that it is difficult to influence visit numbers by pricing alone and that exchange rates, which are outside HRP's control, are also influential.

2.3 *Key events for Trustees' diaries*

Dates for Trustees' diaries were noted. Trustees were asked to suggest potential guests for the Constable's Reception on 21 June.

3. **Designations from 2016/17**

3.1 Introducing the paper, Sue Hall explained that this was an update on the position presented to Trustees in March. Trustees approved the recommendations in the paper. The Chairman asked that he receive a note of the final financial position based on year-end closing figures and the designations just agreed.

4. **Digital Programme**

4.1 Nikolai Segura joined the meeting to give a brief presentation on the progress of the Digital Programme over the last year, including the new website and Digital Visitor Guide, improvements to HRP's CRM system, a Digital Asset Management system (Bowyer) and roll out of the new governance framework.

Questions from Trustees, and responses (shown in italics), were:

Zeinab Badawi – HRP should ensure that images across all HRP media are inclusive. Will there be links to partners' websites on the HRP site? *There will be; mainly close working partners such as the Royal Armouries, but others could be explored.*

Sir Nick Houghton – how well is HRP marketing the site on line? *HRP is working with a marketing and a specialist search and website positioning agency to ensure that our search engine ranking and website marketing improves consistently. We are also working to ensure the website regularly has new and updated content.*

Liz Cleaver offered congratulations to all involved and commended Michael Day for ensuring that this change initiative has had the right level of priority and focus. What are the key things that HRP needs to do to be customer focused going forward? *The*



entire initiative has been developed around the customer, and throughout HRP has tested customers' needs and wants through workshops, focus groups and other evaluation. For example, the website has been designed to drive people to the palaces and help them get the most out of their visit, which is what customers have told us they want. This approach should be continued.

Jonathan Marsden – is there a way to capture information about users of the DVGs? *Detailed data (e.g. language selected, pages visited, length of use etc.) will be captured every day and analysed.*

Bruce Carnegie-Brown – is there a sponsorship opportunity for the handsets? *This has been explored but will be looked at again.*

Louise Wilson – will there still be multiple CRM systems? *There will be a single CRM system, although this will be fed with data from other systems.*

Trustees thanked the team and endorsed the progress update. At the strategic review in the autumn Trustees will be given information on the outcomes that are anticipated in the next three years, so that they may consider how this area of HRP's work should be moving forward.

5. Annual Board effectiveness review 2016/17

- 5.1 The Chairman introduced the review, thanking Trustees for their time and input to the process and acknowledging that while a few areas for improvement were identified, Trustees had been very positive about the effectiveness of the Board.

It was noted that training on the responsibilities of a Trustee had been requested by one Trustee and that this will be organised. Others are invited to participate if they wish.

Zeinab Badawi suggested that addressing Trustees' known interests in advance and enshrining them in HRP's work would reduce the need for them to keep repeating the same point.

Trustees were pleased to see recognition of the need to improve on this year's strategy session, and that plans were in place to do so.

Recognising that HRP is evidently a very successful organisation, Sir Nick Houghton cautioned against complacency. Trustees agreed that this was a watchpoint; that the tone of discussion was important in guarding against this and that they should create opportunities during the year to discuss weaker areas.

The report was agreed.

6. London Bridge

- 6.1 The report was noted.

7. Sub-committees

- 7.1 Carole Souter gave a verbal report to accompany the draft minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee which were noted by the Board. Michael Day reassured Trustees that HRP had taken the necessary precautions following the ransomware incident that had recently affected the NHS. The Chairman asked that the scope of HRP's cyber risk coverage was communicated to him.

- 7.2 The minutes of the Investment Committee were noted.

- 7.3 The Chairman gave a verbal update of the progress of the new Trustee appointment.



8. Projects and expenditure

8.1 *Investment decision HCP electrical works*

The investment decision for the HCP electrical installation was approved, with Trustees agreeing that it was important to appoint a contractor with knowledge of the palace's electrical systems. The Chairman and John Barnes will review final costings when the tender process is complete.

8.2 *HRPE AGM and nomination of Michael Day to represent HRP*

The AGM was noted and Michael Day's nomination accepted.

8.3 *Register of interests*

The year-end register of interest was noted.

9. Any other business

Louise Wilson thanked Michael Day and the team for an outstanding event in New York for the *Enlightened Princesses* exhibition.

John Barnes gave an update on the recruitment of the two new Directors.

Liz Cleaver congratulated the Campaign Board on the excellent King's Presence Chamber event at the Banqueting House.

The Chairman reported that the recruitment of a new Trustee had been delayed by the election, but it should be finalised shortly thereafter.

On behalf of the Trustees and HRP as a whole, Liz Cleaver was thanked for her outstanding contribution to HRP over the last six years.

10. Next meeting: 16 June, Hampton Court Palace

