

NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM COUNCIL

Minutes of the 166th Meeting of the Museum Council held in the Boardroom at the National Army Museum, Chelsea, at 1000hrs on Wednesday 29th May 2019

Present

General Sir Richard Shirreff (Chairman), Lt Gen Sir Simon Mayall (Deputy Chair), Mr. William Wells, Mrs. Judith Donovan, Mr. Patrick Aylmer, Mr. John Duncan, Dr. Paul Schreier, Mr. Guy Perricone, Mrs. Sabine Vandenbroucke, Ms. Jessica Spungin and Dr. Jonathan Boff.

In Attendance

Field Marshal Sir John Chapple (Honorary Vice Patron), Mr. Mike Robbins (Chief Accountant, Army Resources), Brigadier Simon Banton (Head of Arms & Services, Home Command), Ms. Brenda Hobday (Honorary Marketing Advisor), Brigadier Justin Maciejewski (Director, National Army Museum), Mr. Mike O'Connor (Deputy Director, Operations & Resources), Ms. Dawn Watkins (Items 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, Assistant Director, Enterprise), Ms. Linda Stranks (Items 2.2, 2.3, 2.4 Heading of Marketing & Communications) and Ms. Lizzy Sutherland (Committee Clerk, Minutes).

Item 1. Council Administration

Item 1.1 Chairman's Opening Remarks

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Item 1.2 Register of Members' Interests

The Register was made available in accordance with Charity Commission advice and no amendments or additions were made.

Item 1.3 Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from HRH The Duke of Kent, Royal Patron of the NAM and Mr. Richard Hughes, Honorary Legal Advisor.

Item 1.4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising

The Minutes were approved and signed as a true record.

Item 2 Directors Update

2.1 Performance 2018/19

The Director updated Council on the strategy review and reflected on the past year along five strategic lines. Special Forces was well received by visitors and Munnings had been a success. A year on footfall was up by 1% and the Director was keen to accelerate gallery refinement.

The Public Programmes Producer had re-developed the programme and events were now almost always full with topics relevant to the core audience. An academic panel had been re-established led by Professor Boff.

There were now more staff in the Templer Study Centre, a viewing room at Stevenage had been established and the Indian Army Memorial Room at Sandhurst was undergoing refurbishment. The digital team were in full flow posting objects online and Salesforce was in

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place to handle enquiries with further development of the system planned to quicken response times and focus curators on meaningful enquiries.

The Regimental Museums Liaison Team was performing well, the network had expanded regionally and included the Army Museums Ogilby Trust (AMOT). There had been further collaborations with our NATO partners and the Museum was currently hosting a French intern.

Council congratulated the Director and acknowledged the significant progress made. The Chair felt there was a completely different sense of momentum at the NAM and was satisfied the Museum was in a good place.

Dr. Schreier was leading the NAM Strategy Group and over the past month individual discussions with Council Members and staff workshops had taken place which stress tested five areas of engagement. The study will identify the detailed elements of opportunities and how to pursue them. It is a big challenge but also a big opportunity and it will be a multi-year pursuit. Feedback from discussions and workshops revealed excitement that the NAM had turned a corner; the quality of staff was incredible, there were lots of good ideas at all levels and there was more energy to be unleashed.

The Director ran through slides and said the focus for this year was to build an execution engine to implement strategy. Members agreed there was tremendous good will and a desire to get it right, so the right structure would help and regular away days were suggested to help harness creativity. The Director found the workforce to be committed, it had taken a couple of years to learn how the new building worked but much progress had been made and the time was right for this strategy work.

2.2 Visitor Analysis

The Assistant Director (Enterprise) presented a top line visitor analysis of 2018/19 vs. 2017/18. The impact of exhibitions was highlighted, Munnings and Special Forces had topped up growth in visitor numbers. Good weather however had meant visitors especially those from Kent and Essex were not coming into London. Play Base performance remained consistent. Final numbers from the research survey were due. Total NAMTL income was 27% up on the prior year and birthday parties, venue hire and exhibitions contributed retail numbers.

2.3 Draft Exhibition Programme

The Director reported on the master exhibition programme. Games was performing satisfactorily and appealed to non-core audiences such as design students who had never visited the Museum previously. The Germany exhibition was developing well for 2020.

2.4 Digital Matrix

The Head of Marketing & Communications reported on Munnings, feedback was good with 98% of visitors recommending the exhibition.

Much of the remaining marketing activity was tactically centered around half term along with Spotlight Saturdays to drive footfall.

Social media performance was good and the website had exceeded the target with more detailed content in the pipeline.

Marcomms circulated a working Digital KPIs document which referenced reach revenue.

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Council were impressed by the Marcomms output especially considering they were a small team. The Director thanked Council Members for their advice and expertise in guiding the teams.

2.5 Sponsor Update

The Head of Arms & Services, Home Command, reported Lieutenant General (Retd) Graham was considering all the ideas on the Army's strategic heritage review and the NAM would be kept informed of any progress.

2.6 Friends & Patrons Update

The Society of the Friends of the National Army Museum (SOFNAM) were positive about the new membership scheme and a vote would take place in June.

There were now 25 Patrons and the group was becoming more diverse. The Patrons recently enjoyed a dinner at the NAM along with a private tour of the Museum. A visit to Stevenage was lined up, along with a trip to Italy.

Item 3. Reports from Committees

Item 3.1 Building for the Future Committee

The Deputy Director (Operations & Resources) updated Council on the Building for the Future project which was coming to a close.

Item 3.2 Performance, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee

The Performance, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee's (PA&RA) updated Terms of Reference were approved by Council.

The Committee conducted a 360 degree review which they found to be of real value. The review would be used as a springboard to make the PA&RA more effective for the benefit of the organisation.

Item 3.3 NAMTL

The NAMTL Chair reported positively on income and budget.

Item 3.4 Collections & Research Committee

The Chair of the Collections & Research Committee reported on progress with the master narrative. The amended version was reviewed by Council and a couple of suggestions were made.

Recommendations from the audit were noted and a detailed implementation plan was in place to ensure the Museum was compliant with risk management.

Council spoke positively about their recent visit to Stevenage and thanked the Collections team for an excellent day.

Item 3.5 Development Committee

The Chair of the Development Committee updated Council on the proposed Terms of Reference which was currently being re-drafted. At the last committee meeting financial criteria had been debated, corporate partnerships explored and an initial list had been worked up for development.

Item 4. Finance Summaries

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The Deputy Director (Operations & Resources) ran through the accounts and reported the NAM was in a healthy position going forward. The NAO required a Deed of Covenant which had been completed and a draft was circulated and approved.

Item 5. Standing Agenda Items

Item 5.1 Health & Safety

The Deputy Director (Operations & Resources) reported on Health & Safety and assured Members the building was deemed safe. The Museum had maintained a RIDDOR free record since re-opening.

Item 6. Any Other Business

The Chair appreciated a positive meeting with good news on NAMTL, marcoms and footfall. Overwhelming support from the Army was recognised and Council expressed their gratitude.

Council 2019 Meeting Dates:

Wednesday 31 July 10am – 12.30pm
Wednesday 6 November 10am – 12.30pm