

MINUTES OF THE NINETY SIXTH MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ARMAGH OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2015 AT 11.00 A.M. IN THE BOARD ROOM, ARMAGH OBSERVATORY

Present: Archbishop Clarke (Chair), Professor A. Hibbert (Deputy Chair), Professor R. Oudmaijer, Professor T. Ray, Mr B. Hannam, Professor M. Merrifield, Mr S. Brown, Professor L. Harra, Mrs P. Wilson, Mr P. McGurgan, Dr M. McKay

Apologies: None

In attendance: Professor M. Bailey, Dr J. Vink, Mrs E.J. Kennedy (Operations Manager), Mrs K. McLoughlin (temporary Accountant)

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 4 JUNE 2015

The minutes of the meeting of 4 June 2015 were reviewed, approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

An update on the Matters Arising can be found in the Action Point Log attached at Annex 1.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

The Chair welcomed Professor Oudmaijer to the meeting and informed the Management Committee (MC) that he had been reappointed by the Governors from 1 July 2015. He also advised the MC that DCAL had decided to reappoint Mr Hannam and Dr McKay for a term of up to 4 years from 1 January 2016. In relation to the Board of Governors, Mr Berry was also to be reappointed from 1 January 2016 and a new Archdeacon (The Venerable Andrew Forster) had been added to the Chapter of the Armagh Cathedral in October 2015, and hence was to become a Governor. The Chair also advised that Mr Hannam, Professor Hibbert and he planned to meet with the DCAL Permanent Secretary in the near future.

6. UPDATE FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE MEETING

6.1. Mr Hannam provided an update from the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) which had met earlier on 12 November 2015. The Committee considered the following areas:

- The Special Investigation into potential irregular expenditure in the Planetarium – Following an initial review of the related documentation by Mr Hannam it was agreed that the Internal Auditors would carry out a Special Investigation. Their report confirmed the original findings and other concerns. It was agreed that DCAL auditors should commission a further investigation with the support of the DFP Fraud Unit. It was likely this investigation would conclude in February 2016. Mr Hannam advised that the 2014/15 accounts had been delayed as a result of the investigations. NIAO had been asked to confirm whether the Observatory could submit its 2014/15 accounts separately as there could be a negative impact on grant applications if the accounts remained outstanding. The MC also acknowledged that the Charities Commission (NI) may also delay the re-registration of the Planetarium as a charity. The Chair recognised the difficult position Dr Vink found himself as the current Acting Head of the Planetarium and Accounting Officer. He reassured him that he would not be held responsible for what had occurred prior to his appointment.
- Terms of Reference for 2015/16 Internal Audit which included Finance, HR, IT Security, Drawdown Process, Grants Management and Follow up on previously accepted recommendations - approved.

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- Implementation of audit recommendations – the ARAC was content with progress.
- Risks – the ARAC was content that all risks had been identified, assessed and were being managed.
- Bi-Annual Assurance Statements – the ARAC was content that the Chair of the Management Committee should sign the Statements, subject to a minor amendment to the Chair's Statement in the Planetarium Assurance Statement.

6.2. Mr Hannam advised that performance appraisals in the Observatory had not been completed for 2014/15. Some support staff had indicated their reluctance to engage with the performance management process as a result of their being excluded from the Equal Pay Settlement. Whilst the two areas were unrelated, the support staff viewed the performance management process as an area where they could demonstrate their discontent. It had been agreed that Professor Bailey was to speak to Professor Hibbert about finalising the 2013/14 appraisals. There was a lengthy discussion about the benefits of a performance management process. All agreed that it was crucial for the performance management process to be updated for AOP and recommenced as soon as possible. Professor Hibbert agreed to speak with Professor Bailey and Dr Vink and provide a timetable for the completion of any outstanding 2014/15 performance reviews and the 2015/16 process, after which an update was to be provided to the MC.

Action Point MC12/11/15 – 01 Professor Hibbert, Professor Bailey and Dr Vink to develop a timetable for the completion of outstanding 2014/15 performance reviews and the 2015/16 process, and subsequently update the Management Committee

6.3. Mr Hannam advised that the ARAC had recommended that the Chair of the Management Committee/Board of Governors review the minutes of meetings in the light of their publication on the Observatory and Planetarium's websites and redact any sensitive material.

7. UPDATES ON OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM ACTIVITIES

- 7.1. Mrs Kennedy tabled an updated summary of the Key Performance Indicators demonstrating performance up to 31 October 2015. All were on track to be achieved, except for the number of participants at outreach events. Concerns had previously been expressed about not achieving this target as the Planetarium had no special exhibitions planned for 2015/16, which had been the case in previous years. Some of the Observatory's Science in the Community activities were now reflected in the actual performance for targets 6 and 8. It was agreed for the next meeting that a comparison would be given to performance at the same stage in the year previous.
- 7.2. Professor Bailey presented his extensive report on the work of the Observatory. The MC commended the Observatory on its work as reflected in the report. For future meetings the MC asked for an Executive Summary, covering issues that the MC needed to be made aware of and once a year a concise annual report should be considered. It was agreed that the information contained in the Director's report was useful for record purposes, was essential for future reviews and historic records and should be a compilation of input from staff across the Observatory, but was not necessary for the Management Committee.
- 7.3. Dr Vink provided an update on activities in the Planetarium. The Committee recognised the importance of having shared knowledge across the staff in the organisation of, for example, how to change projector lamps in the theatre. In the absence of this shared knowledge, it was likely that the Planetarium would be faced with increased costs to ensure that it can continue to deliver front line services. The Chair thanked Dr Vink for taking on the role of Acting Head of the Planetarium in June 2015.
- 7.4. The Committee was content with the update provided by Mr Hannam in relation to the Risk Registers and Bi-annual Assurance Statements and approved the current drafts, subject to a small amendment suggested by the ARAC.

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8. UPDATE ON FINANCIAL POSITION

- 8.1. Mrs McLoughlin provided an update on the financial position in AOP in 2015/16 and the forecast position for 2016/17. Professor Bailey recognised the additional in-year support provided by the DCAL in 2015/16 but expressed concerns about the 2016/17 position. He explained that his view was that 'reduced' budgets for the Observatory and Planetarium would have to be developed for 2016/17 providing a balanced outturn and thereby enabling a Business Case to be approved by the Minister. These should be followed up with bids for additional in-year funding when monitoring rounds permit. He also advised the MC that the cost of the Chief Executive was an additional cost.
- 8.2. Dr Vink explained that the position for the Planetarium was different to the Observatory in the implications of budget cuts. The discussion continued and it was agreed that the two budgets would remain separate until the appointment of a new Chief Executive and that discussions should be initiated with the DCAL to explore options as to how savings could be made and the implications of doing so. A sub-group of the MC was to be established to work with Dr Vink on developing options.

Action Point MC12/11/15 – 02 A sub-group of the Management Committee was to be established to work with Dr Vink on developing options as to how savings could be made in 2016/17 and the implications of doing so.

9. UPDATE ON ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE PROJECT

Professor Hibbert provided a brief update on the Organisational Change Project and referred the MC to page 2 of Paper 3. The Project Board was due to meet later on 12 November 2015.

10. UPDATE ON REVIEW OF ARMAGH OBSERVATORY RESEARCH AND OUTREACH

Professor Bailey reported that the draft Report from the Review Panel had been delayed but initial indications were positive and demonstrated an improvement from the last Research Assessment Exercise carried out in 2008. The MC was content to consider the report when it was finalised.

11. ANNUAL REPORT FROM THE EMPLOYMENT CONDITIONS AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE 2014/15

Professor Hibbert presented a written report (Paper 11) on the work of the Committee during 2014/15. The Chair thanked the Committee members and other MC members for their contribution.

12. AOP 2016/17 VOLUNTARY EXIT SCHEME

Professor Hibbert confirmed that the business case had been submitted to DCAL on 6 November 2015. No feedback had been received.

13. ALTERNATIVE USE OF AOP LAND

Mrs Kennedy provided an update on the development of an agreement with Atlas Communications for the use of the Planetarium's bungalow. A proposal from Eircom UK was also considered and it was agreed that Dr Vink should continue engagement with Eircom UK.

Action Point MC12/11/15 – 03 Dr Vink to continue discussions with Eircom UK with regards to exploring their proposal in more detail.

14. AOB

- 14.1. The Safeguarding and Data Protection Policies had been considered by Mr McGurgan and Professor Hibbert (in their role as Policy Review Sub-group) in advance of the meeting. The Committee approved the new versions.
- 14.2. The Chair advised the MC that the DCAL Permanent Secretary planned to deliver a presentation on the NI Events Company Ltd at the next meeting on 28 January 2016 at 11am.
- 14.3. Mrs Kennedy provided the MC with details of training courses relevant to them and asked anyone interested in registering for these or future courses, to contact her.

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Action Point MC12/11/15 – 04 Management Committee members to contact the Operations Manager if they wished to register for courses relevant to their appointment.

15. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 28 January 2015** in the Armagh Planetarium.

The meeting ended at 1.30 p.m.

Signed as a true record of the Meeting

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(Chair)

Dated:

Updated Actions as at 12 November 2015

Reference	Action	Owner	Progress
MC13/11/14 - 02	Dr Mason to make arrangements to obtain an indication of the potential lease value of land SELB are interested in	Dr Mason	Ongoing 21 January 2015: Dr Mason to obtain this information
MC13/11/14 - 03	Dr Mason to arrange a meeting with the SELB to discuss the potential of leasing land from AOP	Dr Mason	Ongoing 20 October 2015: SELB contacted Jorick Vink to arrange a meeting but it was cancelled by them on the day the meeting was to take place. 4 June 2015: The Committee agreed to await further contact from SELB. 21 January 2015: A meeting took place on 21 November 2014 with the SELB architect and on 20 January 2015 with the SELB representative Paul Crooks. Another meeting is to be arranged for both Directors with SELB representatives
MC29/01/15 - 01	Dr McKay to explore within ESA if exhibits could be provided to the Planetarium	Dr McKay	Ongoing 12 November 2015: Dr McKay indicated that some items could be made available. He agreed to discuss options with Dr Vink
MC29/01/15 - 03	New Management Board to consider the areas of concern arising from the Board Evaluation Questionnaire	Chair of new Management Board	Not started 28 May 2015: No action has been taken
MC29/01/15 - 05	Board Operating Framework to be updated following any new governance arrangements arising from the Review of Organisation and Management	Mrs Kennedy	Not started 28 May 2015: No action has been taken
MC04/06/15 - 01	Mrs Kennedy to arrange for the outstanding maintenance activities to be commissioned in the Planetarium	Mrs Kennedy	Completed 28 October 2015: All the maintenance works were commissioned in June 2015 and completed by September 2015
MC04/06/15 - 02	Professor Hibbert to share the Report from the Grievance Panel with Mr Alastair Hughes, Head of Museums and Libraries branch	Professor Hibbert	Completed 12 November 2015: A copy of the Report will be placed on file within AOP.

MC04/06/15 – 03	Professor Hibbert to arrange for an internal recruitment competition to be carried out for the post of Acting Head of Armagh Planetarium	Professor Hibbert	Completed 28 October 2015: Dr Jorick Vink was appointed as Acting Head of the Planetarium in mid-June 2015
MC04/06/15 – 04	Professor Bailey to draft an additional paragraph to strengthen the introductory section of the Business Plan	Professor Bailey	Not Completed 12 November 2015: A letter had been received from the Minister on 4 June approving the Business Plan so there was no opportunity to include these proposed additions. It was agreed that the additional paragraph would be included in the draft for 2016/17.
MC04/06/15 – 05	Professor Hibbert to share his written report on the work of the Employment Conditions and Remuneration Committee with the Management Committee	Professor Hibbert	Completed 12 November 2015: On the agenda for meeting on 12 November 2015
MC04/06/15 – 06	Mrs Kennedy to share the draft agreement with Mr McGurgan and also liaise with the Planetarium's solicitor	Mrs Kennedy	Ongoing 28 October 2015: Mr McGurgan provided his comments on the draft lease and correspondence has continued with the solicitor. The current hold up is in relation to obtaining maps of the property as quoted throughout the lease.
MC04/06/15 – 07	Mrs Kennedy to seek advice from the Asset Management Unit about the Eircom UK proposal	Mrs Kennedy	Completed 28 October 2015: This will be covered on the agenda of the meeting on 12 November 2015

Matter Arising

Paragraph 8	NIAO Audit of Annual Report and Accounts	Mrs McLaughlin	NIAO have delayed completing the audit of the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium 2014-15 accounts until the DCAL/Central Fraud Team investigation is concluded and they have had an opportunity to determine what, if any, impact the matters under investigation have on the accounts. It is not possible for the Observatory's accounts to be certified individually as AOP accounts are treated as one set of accounts.
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