

**MINUTES OF THE NINETY NINTH MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ARMAGH OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2016 AT 11.00 A.M. IN THE CASSINI ROOM**

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

**Apologies:** Mr P McGurgan

**In attendance:** Professor M Burton (AOP Director), Professor G Doyle (Acting Head of Observatory), Mr A. Hughes (Interim Accounting Officer), Mrs T Hogg (Organisational Change Project Manager), Mrs D Neill (Operations Manager), Mrs K. McLoughlin (temporary Accountant)

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded as above.

**2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

Mrs Hogg is contracted by the Strategic Investment Board of which Mr Hannam is the Chief Executive.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 8 JUNE 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of 8 June 2016 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.

Mr Brown thanked the Chair, on behalf of the Committee, for hosting the retirement presentation to Professor Mark Bailey.

**5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

5.1 The Chair welcomed the new Director of AOP, Professor Burton who took up post on 1 August 2016. The Chair thanked Professor Doyle for acting and continuing to act as Head of the Observatory.

5.2 It was noted that Dr Vink had resigned as Head of the Planetarium and the Chair thanked him for his contribution. The Chair also thanked Mr Hughes for acting as Interim Accounting Officer.

**6. UPDATE FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE**

6.1 Mr Hannam provided an update from the preceding Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) meeting. He explained that in relation to the ongoing fraud investigation the report should be finalized and available before the next meeting. This report will enable the completion of the 2014/15 accounts, which will then allow finalization of the 2015/16 accounts. It was expected that the spend by the former Planetarium Director will be deemed irregular, meaning that the accounts will be qualified with a special note from the Comptroller and Auditor General.

6.2 Mr Hannam advised that Internal Audit's focus for this year would be on contracts, pay and IT security.

6.3 Mr Hannam also advised the Committee that the ARAC had reviewed and noted papers on risk management and the bi annual assurance statement.

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6.4 The final matter from ARAC was the issue of capitalization thresholds. The ARAC agreed that whilst at present there are 2 different figures, £3.6K for the Observatory and none for the Planetarium, that this should be standardized. Mr Hughes advised that the usual figure was £1K and that the Audit Office will be keen that the organization agrees a standardized figure.

## 7. UPDATES ON OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM ACTIVITIES

Professor Burton advised the Committee that he was very honoured to be appointed as AOP Director and expressed his thanks to the many people who had brought AOP to this stage.

7.1 Professor Burton explained that there were many positives about the organization and also a number of issues that need to be addressed in order to move AOP forward. Professor Burton took the Committee through his report, highlighting some of the new initiatives he has implemented, such as Astrobytes, staff meetings, using students to talk at the open nights etc. The Chair and the Committee commented positively on these initiatives, welcoming the clear cross fertilization between the Observatory and Planetarium. Mrs Wilson suggested that it would be good for the Minister to visit and see the organization working.

7.2 The Committee was referred to the appendices for full information regarding the Capital Development Programme. Professor Burton explained that the grand vision is to enhance the facilities, bringing together the sites in a modern building, allow outreach and activities and open up the heritage of the site and make use of the Observatory, keeping the unbroken heritage from 1790. Mrs Hogg advised the Committee that the vision has gone into the Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) bid. Mr F Devitt (DfC) and Ms A Cosgrove (DfC) are meeting with the capital team today to move this forward. It will require a transformation board to be set up and someone from AOP to drive this forward. The Committee discussed the possibility of multi funding and linking into other projects such as the Armagh Masterplan.

7.3 Referring to the 2015 Observatory Research Review, Professor Burton sought the Committee's views on how the next review should be approached. Following discussion on the possible approaches, Professor Burton advised that he would prepare a paper for a future Management Committee meeting. **Action Point MC 06/10/16-01 A discussion on research review is to be an agenda item at a future meeting**

7.4 Professor Burton summarized progress to date on the creation of a science vision. He hoped that a more mature document would be available for the next Management Committee. **Action Point MC 06/10/16-02 Professor Burton to present Science Vision at meeting in January 2017**

7.5 In relation to progress on the outreach vision, Professor Burton advised the Committee of his aim of increasing contact with secondary schools, teaching syllabus elements at A level. Professor Harra suggested developing information in relation to the careers aspect for secondary schools, to show students the opportunities available. In response to Mr Brown's question about whether AOP wanted to focus on generic or specific science, Professor Burton confirmed he would anticipate this being broader than physics. Mr Brown suggested consideration of areas such as chemistry, geography and history could be considered. Mrs Wilson advised Professor Burton that syllabus changes are underway.

The Committee discussed the application for funding to the Wellcome Trust. Mr Brown suggested that the Department of Education may be worth contacting as well as AOP's governing Department, DfC, for matching funding.

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7.6 Professor Burton informed the Committee that he hoped the Head of Corporate Services post would be advertised within a month. He expressed his thanks to Professor Hibbert, Mrs Hogg and Mr Hughes for their work to date.

7.7 Professor Burton raised a number of items for discussion. The Committee expressed their hope that the introduction of a Senior Management Team (SMT) would alleviate current pressures. The creation of the SMT may also allow fewer Management Committee meetings; however, currently the Terms of Reference have been set at 4. The Committee agreed with Professor Burton that consideration could be given to 2 face to face meetings and 2 video/telephone meetings.

For matters requiring approval by the Committee between meetings, the Committee discussed and agreed that this could be done electronically with delegated authority for minor matters given to Professor Hibbert. Mrs Hogg advised that some matters such as changes to staff terms and conditions would have to go through the Department.

KPIs: Professor Burton advised that he would like to revise the KPIs for next year. The Committee welcomed this review and advised that once Professor Burton had revised these in conjunction with his management team, he could present these to the Committee.

Gender Equity: Whilst Athena Swan has wider recognition, the Committee recommended that AOP start with Juno and Professor Ray recommended Professor Burton engage with Sheila Gilheany in this regard.

The Chair thanked Professor Burton for this report and acknowledged the heavy workload. The Committee commended Professor Burton for the great start he had made.

*There was a short break for lunch after 1pm.*

7.8 Mr Hughes highlighted key points on his final report to the Management Committee. The Committee were content to note the report. The Chair thanked Mr Hughes for the speedy and comprehensive update.

7.9 Mr Hughes explained the new summary sheet and in relation to the high priority risk (single point failures) advised there would be partial mitigation with a new temporary IT Officer.

7.10 The Committee noted the contents of the Bi Annual Assurance statement, which had been prepared by Mr Hughes receiving assurances from Professor Michael Burton and Professor Gerry Doyle. Dr Vink had not provided the required assurance.

The Chair thanked Mr Hughes for his contribution to AOP.

*Mr Hughes left the meeting.*

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**8. TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Committee approved the governance documents. **Action Point MC 06/10/16-03 Management Committee to seek final approval and adoption of governance documents from the AOP Board of Governors including the approval of a Remunerated Chair**

**9. PROJECT BOARD UPDATE**

Professor Hibbert reported to the Committee that in reviewing the original brief at its meeting the previous day, the Project Board consider that most of its role is now accomplished. One final meeting will be held in November.

The Committee agreed that work should revert back to the Management Committee and thanked the Project Board for their work.

**10. CAPITAL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

Mrs Hogg circulated a paper, Draft Proposal to establish an AOP Capital Transformation Board. Mrs Hogg asked that the Management Committee note the submission and offer any thoughts.

**11. AOB**

- Dates of future meetings. Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017 and Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
Professor Hibbert advised that the project board will request that the Management Committee look at Corporate Strategy at its next meeting. Mrs Wilson advised that she would be unable to attend.  
**Action Point MC 06/10/16-04 Corporate Strategy to be discussed**

Professor Oudmaijer reiterated the Committee's thanks to Mr Hughes and it was agreed that a formal note of thanks should be issued. **Action Point MC 06/10/16-05 Note of thanks to be issued to Mr Hughes**

**12. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETINGS**

The next meetings will be on

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2017

and

Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March 2017

The meeting ended at 3pm

Signed as a true record of the Meeting



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(Chair)

Dated:

## Updated Actions as at 6 October 2016

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	Mr Hughes	<p><b>Propose to Close (agreed)</b></p> <p><b>28 September 2016:</b> On hold pending AOP Capital Development Programme</p> <p><b>12 May 2016:</b> Paul Crooks, Head of Claims &amp; Legal, Education Authority wishes to meet to discuss "the planned works at Armstrong Primary School". Date TBA.</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> No further contact has been made by SELB about accessing additional land from the Planetarium</p> <p><b>21 January 2015:</b> Dr Mason to obtain this information</p>
MC13/11/14 - 03	Dr Mason to arrange a meeting with the SELB to discuss the potential of leasing land from AOP	Mr Hughes	<p><b>Propose to Close (agreed)</b></p> <p><b>28 September 2016:</b> On hold pending AOP Capital Development Programme</p> <p><b>12 May 2016:</b> Paul Crooks, Head of Claims &amp; Legal, Education Authority wishes to meet to discuss "the planned works at Armstrong Primary School". Date TBA.</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> No further contact has been made by SELB</p> <p><b>20 October 2015:</b> SELB contacted Jorick Vink to arrange a meeting but it was cancelled by them on the day the meeting was to take place.</p> <p><b>4 June 2015:</b> The Committee agreed to await further contact from SELB.</p> <p><b>21 January 2015:</b> 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.</p>
MC29/01/15 - 01	Dr McKay to explore within ESA if exhibits could be provided to the Planetarium	Dr McKay	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>20 September 2016:</b> Dr McKay has spoken to ESA PR in HQ (Paris). ESA would like to understand the direction AOP intends to follow and what support they could provide. It has been decided to wait until the new Head of Education &amp; Outreach is appointed before pursuing further.</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> Dr McKay to introduce Planetarium representative to the ESA teams to pursue potential exhibits.</p>
MC29/01/15 - 03	New Management Board to consider the areas of concern arising from the Board Evaluation Questionnaire	Chair of new Management Board	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>16 May 2016:</b> The Organisational Change Project Board is considering these</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> The Organisational Change Project Board is considering these.</p> <p><b>28 May 2015:</b> No action has been taken</p>

MC29/01/15 - 05	Board Operating Framework to be updated following any new governance arrangements arising from the Review of Organisation and Management	Mrs Neill	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>20 September 2016:</b> The final draft governance documents were presented at the Management Committee meeting in June and subsequent amendments made. The final documents are now being presented at the October Management Committee meeting on 6th October 2016. Board Operating Framework to be devised following this.</p> <p><b>16 May 2016:</b> New governance arrangements for AOP will be presented to the Management Committee at its June 2016 meeting. Board Operating Framework to be agreed after this.</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> The Organisational Change Project Board is considering new governance arrangements.</p> <p><b>28 May 2015:</b> No action has been taken</p>
MC04/06/15 – 06	Mrs Kennedy to share the draft agreement with Mr McGurgan and also liaise with the Planetarium’s solicitor	Mrs Neill	<p><b>Ongoing</b></p> <p><b>15 August 2016:</b> Amended maps have been received and approved. AOP is currently awaiting a response from the Solicitors in relation to amendments required to the lease agreement.</p> <p><b>24 May 2016:</b> Atlas Communications has been contacted again and they are to follow up with their surveyor in relation to the maps.</p> <p><b>15 August 2016:</b> Amended maps were received and approved by AOP. Amendments to the lease have been requested. AOP awaits response from Solicitors</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> Ongoing discussions with the solicitor and Atlas Communications about the production of maps to accompany the lease.</p> <p><b>28 October 2015:</b> 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.</p>
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	Professor Burton and Mrs Neill	<p><b>Propose to Close (agreed – now part of AOP operations)</b></p> <p><b>28 September 2016:</b> New appraisal system has been launched. Six month reviews due to be completed. Professor Burton and Mrs Neill will action this in October.</p> <p><b>12 May 2016:</b> Planetarium 2015/16 Reviews underway. New HR system introduced at both Planetarium and Observatory.</p> <p><b>28 January 2016:</b> The 2012-14 Observatory reviews have been finalised. The 2014/15 reviews are to be completed asap. A template report (based on NICS approach) that could be used in 2016/17 has been developed for consideration.</p>

MC12/11/15 - 03	Dr Vink to continue discussions with Eircom UK with regards to exploring their proposal in more detail.	Professor Burton	<b>Propose to Close</b> <b>28 September 2016:</b> On hold pending capital development programme <b>12 May 2016:</b> Nothing to report <b>21 January 2016:</b> Nothing to report
MC28/01/16 - 04	Dr Vink and Mr Hughes to investigate levels of maintenance and training support for the Digistar 5 equipment, subject to funding being available	Dr Vink and Mr Hughes	<b>Completed</b> <b>28 September 2016:</b> Staff received training by end of July <b>12 May 2016:</b> Some training provided for Planetarium staff by Evans & Sutherland Engineer for Digistar equipment. Julie Thompson is preparing training material for staff prior to leaving through VES at the end of July.
MC08/06/16-01	Letter to be issued to Professor Bailey thanking him for his service and inviting him to a presentation	Chair	<b>Completed</b> 29 June 2016: Letter issued to Professor Bailey
MC08/06/16-02	Congratulatory letter to be issued to the previous Operations Manager.	Chair	<b>Completed</b> 29 June 2016: Letter issued to Mrs Kennedy
MC08/06/16-03	Chair of ARAC to provide Mrs Hogg with written comments on ARAC's draft Terms of Reference	Mr Hannam	<b>Completed</b> 30 June 2016: Comments issued to Mrs Hogg
MC08/06/16-04	Memo to be issued to staff in relation to holiday leave.	Mr Hughes	<b>Completed</b> <b>1 July 2016:</b> Memo issued to all staff
MC08/06/16-05	Confirmation required that the Department has briefed the new Minister on AOP's development plan	Mrs Hogg	<b>Completed</b> <b>Update provided at the meeting, 6 October 2016</b> Mrs Hogg confirmed that Mr F Devitt and Ms A Cosgrove met 2 days with special advisor and advised about plans and capital development The Minister is keen to come up to AOP and is signing off press release linked to new development plans. He has been informed.
MC08/06/16-06	Access to Queen's University's journals to be investigated`	Professor Hibbert	<b>Ongoing</b> <b>29 September 2016:</b> Professor Hibbert has investigated this and he and Professor Burton will meet with the Head of Information Services at QUB to progress this.

MC08/06/16-07	Confirmation of who maintains the media references list to be provided	Mrs Neill	<b>Completed</b> <b>20 June 2016</b> : Aileen McKee maintains this listing
MC08/06/16-08	Amendments requested to AOP Governance documentation	Mrs Hogg	<b>Completed</b> <b>20 September 2016</b> : The final draft governance documents were presented at the Management Committee meeting in June and subsequent amendments made. The final documents are now being presented at the October Management Committee meeting on 6th October 2016.