

MINUTES OF THE NINETY FIRST MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ARMAGH OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM HELD ON 23 JANUARY 2014 AT 11.30 A.M. IN THE BOARDROOM ARMAGH OBSERVATORY

Present: Archbishop Clarke (Chair), Mr E. Donnelly, Professor T. Ray, Dr M. McKay, Mrs P. Wilson, Professor A. Hibbert (Deputy Chair) and Professor R. Oudmaijer

Apologies: Professor M. Merrifield, Mr B. Hannam and Archdeacon R. Hoey

In attendance: Professor M. Bailey, Dr T. Mason, Mrs E.J. Kennedy and Mr A. Hughes (DCAL Observer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded as above.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

No conflicts of interest were declared.

3. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2013

The minutes of the meeting of 18 October 2013 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.

5. CHAIR'S BUSINESS

Nothing to report.

6. DIRECTORS' INTERIM REPORTS AND REVIEW OF RISK REGISTERS AND QUARTERLY ASSURANCE STATEMENTS

Directors' Interim Reports

- 6.1. Dr Mason provided an update on the Planetarium (paragraphs 10 – 21 of Paper 3). One point of accuracy was noted - Stargazing Live attendance was over 4,000 rather than the 2,000 originally documented. In addition, Dr Mason reported that the Planetarium's website was the 305,000th most popular site in the world, with over a million hits per year.
- 6.2. Dr Mason presented his draft Business Plan for 2014/15. He explained that DCAL had asked for a single Armagh Observatory and Planetarium Business Plan. Dr Mason highlighted that the Planetarium was likely to exceed its target for visitor numbers in 2013/14. This was assisted by the use of GroupOn vouchers, an approach which is likely to continue into 2014/15.

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- 6.3. Professor Bailey provided an update for the Observatory for October – December 2013 (paragraphs 1 – 9 of Paper 3). He explained that the new ‘aroundNorth’ exhibit will initially be a portable exhibition that will tour across the UK and then return to Armagh one year later, when a permanent installation will be fixed in the Observatory grounds.
- 6.4. Professor Ray queried whether funding could be obtained from Horizon 2020 to continue the work delivered under EU-UNAWE. Professor Bailey explained that no funding was available for that type of activity under Horizon 2020. He nevertheless highlighted the breadth of the impact made through the UNAWE activities and remained hopeful that relationships built would be maintained.
- 6.5. Professor Oudmaijer sought confirmation on the Observatory’s contribution to the Advanced Technology Solar Telescope project. Professor Bailey confirmed that £100k had been contributed to the project which was being led by Queen’s University. This core funding had been used to obtain a similar commitment from other universities. Dr McKay highlighted the importance of this connection between industry and academia in Northern Ireland. The ATST project is very important to underpin this work and the work of the Northern Ireland Space Office.
- 6.6. Professor Bailey provided a synopsis of the achievements of the Observatory during 2013:
- 44 refereed journal publications
 - 36 conference and other publications
 - Various presentations by Observatory staff at national and international venues
 - 190 primary-sector teachers trained through EU- UNAWE who directly reach almost 8,000 pupils and over 8,000 indirectly
 - Over 230 citations relating to the Armagh Observatory in worldwide mass media publications
- 6.7. Professor Bailey referenced the 2014/15 Business Plan which is currently being drafted. It will be reviewed by the Directors in advance of being submitted to DCAL by 31 January 2014.
- 6.8. Professor Ray conveyed the Management Committee’s thanks to Ms McKearney and Professor Bailey for their efforts in the UNAWE programme. Mrs Wilson recognised that it had been a difficult year for the organisation but welcomed the achievements of both the Observatory and Planetarium.
- 6.9. All members agreed the new summary update should be used in the future and thanked Mrs Kennedy for her work in producing it.

Review of Risk Management Policy and Updated Risk Registers

- 6.10. Mrs Kennedy presented the Risk Management Policy and summarised the views of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) from their meeting on 20 January 2014. More work is to be completed to assess the Risk Appetite for individual risks.
- 6.11. Dr Mason made reference to the Risk Appetite table (Appendix 1) where he felt that the risk appetite was greater than ‘Averse’ in some areas. When considering the Impact

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rating (Appendix 2) in all cases, the value of any risk taken would be low or low-medium.

- 6.12. The Chair delegated authority to the ARAC to consider the Risk Appetite for the individual risks. The Committee approved the Risk Management Policy, recognising that a further update to the Risk Registers would be provided following the next ARAC meeting.
- 6.13. Dr Mason asked for his appreciation to be recorded for the excellent work completed by Mrs Kennedy.

Review of Quarterly Assurance Statements

- 6.14. Mrs Kennedy informed the meeting that as the Quarterly Assurance Statements for July-September 2013 had been revised following an Accountability meeting with DCAL, they were required to be considered by the Committee again. The revised versions had been endorsed by ARAC on 20 January 2014. Professor Ray queried why there was only partial assurance around Policy Implementation. Professor Bailey explained this was because staff training in Safeguarding arrangements was out of date. This training has been arranged for February 2014. The Committee accepted the revised drafts of the organisation's Statements.
- 6.15. Professor Bailey provided further information on the Statement for October – December 2013. The Statement had been endorsed by ARAC on 20 January 2014. Professor Oudmaijer requested an update on the recruitment exercise for Management Committee members. Professor Hibbert stated that the competition is ongoing and interviews will take place in February 2014. A Ministerial decision is expected by April 2014. The Committee considered and agreed the content of the Statement.
- 6.16. Dr Mason provided further information on the Statement for the last quarter, highlighting areas where no or partial assurance could be given. He confirmed that training in carrying out tendering exercises had been arranged for the Operations Manager in early February 2014. Mr Hughes provided a brief explanation of government procurement rules and the various approvals required. Professor Hibbert provided an update on the ongoing disciplinary matter. The Committee considered and agreed the content of the Statement.

7. Update on Strategic Planning Seminar

- 7.1. Professor Hibbert provided an update on the Strategic Planning Seminar held on 4 December 2013. He drew attention to the agreed actions arising (Paper 7, page 10). The Terms of Reference for a Review of the Organisation and Management of Armagh Observatory and Planetarium were considered. An Organisational Review Steering Committee has been proposed to oversee the review. This comprises Brett Hannam (Chair), Professor Ray and Professor Hibbert who will seek advice from the Directors when required. He clarified that this Review was separate from the scientific review discussed at the October meeting.
- 7.2. Dr McKay expressed his concern at the heavy handed approach for an organisation the size of AOP. He reminded the Committee of the great number of differences between the two sides of the organisation and conveyed his view that they would not fit seamlessly

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together. Professor Oudmajer felt that the Science and Technology Facilities Council should be explicitly named as a stakeholder. It was agreed that the independent reviewers should carry out the review and provide regular updates to the Organisational Review Steering Committee.

7.3. Other issues raised were:

- a) Could the Review be completed by the proposed reporting date of March 2014? It was agreed that this had not taken into account the approvals required from the Board of Governors and the Management Committee. The Chair agreed to consider mechanisms for the Board of Governors to consider and approve the Terms of Reference given that they are not due to meet until 28 March 2014.
- b) Should the members of the Organisational Review Team (with a recommendation this should be limited to 3 people) receive remuneration, given the time commitment required?

Action Point MC23/01/14 – 01 Chair to consider the most effective way for the Board of Governors expeditiously to consider and approve the Terms of Reference for the Review of the Organisation and Management of AOP.

Action Point MC23/01/14 – 02 Committee members to suggest names to be considered for the Organisational Review Team by 21 February 2014.

Action Point MC23/01/14 – 03 DCAL to confirm whether the Organisational Review Team should receive remuneration.

- 7.4. Members agreed that they were broadly content with the Terms of Reference but were asked to provide any further comments to Professor Hibbert by 21 February 2014.

Action Point MC23/01/14 – 04 Members to provide further comments on the Terms of Reference for the Review of the Organisation and Management of AOP to Professor Hibbert by 21 February 2014.

- 7.5. Professor Hibbert will use these responses to inform a discussion with Mr Hannam and agree the information to be shared with the Board of Governors.

Action Point MC23/01/14 – 05 Professor Hibbert to arrange a meeting with Mr Hannam to discuss a revised version of the Terms of Reference.

8. Board Operating Framework

- 8.1. Professor Bailey presented the draft Board Operating Framework and explained that this had been drafted in order to comply with the revised Code of Good Practice on Corporate Governance in Central Government Departments. Although this Code had been written for central government departments, arm's length bodies were encouraged to adopt the practices set out in it.

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- 8.2. The Chair welcomed the production of this document and thought it would be very useful to share with new members when appointed to the Committee. The Committee approved the document and agreed that it should be shared with the Organisational Review Team.

Action Point MC23/01/14 – 06 Mrs Kennedy to provide a finalised version of the Board Operating Framework to the Review team.

- 8.3. Professor Bailey suggested that as the Board Operating Framework was to be reviewed annually, the outcome of the Organisational Review would have to be considered in future versions.

9. AOB

- Update on Safeguarding

- 9.1. Mrs Kennedy provided an update on the Safeguarding Policy and recommendations made by the Committee for Culture, Arts and Leisure. Training will have been provided to all staff by mid-February 2014. The revised Safeguarding policy was approved by the Committee.

- Update to mandate for e-banking

- 9.2. Professor Bailey presented this request to have the Operations Manager added to the mandate. This was also an internal audit recommendation. The Committee approved that Mrs Kennedy be added to the list of signatories.

- Correspondence

- 9.3. After a short discussion concerning a letter from a member of staff it was agreed that it should be referred to the Employment Conditions and Remuneration Committee, who will have a mandate to make a decision.

- Damage to rear retaining wall at Planetarium

- 9.4. Dr Mason reported that the plaster had fallen off the retaining wall over the Christmas closure period. This had been reported to DFP Properties Division but turned out to be a bigger job than first realised. The Insurance brokers have been notified and an assessor has been on site. A structural engineer has been requested and the insurance company are awaiting their report. It is hoped that this will fall within the 10 year warranty for the building work which was carried out in 2005.

- Collaboration with the Institute of Astronomy, Bulgaria

- 9.5. Professor Bailey updated the Committee on the progress of discussions of a collaboration with the Institute of Astronomy in Bulgaria, which would include gaining access to their 2m telescope. The Committee agreed that Professor Bailey should continue discussions with a view to concluding the agreement.

- Library developments

- 9.6. Professor Bailey reminded the Committee of the shortage of storage facilities faced by the Observatory. He has assessed several options and arrangements are being made to move some of the modern journals (which can be accessed electronically) off site for medium-term storage in Armagh. The freed up space will allow some of the older books currently in storage, to be brought back into the main library, improving access to this part of the collection. This was noted by the Committee.

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- Lightning and Fire Detection Update

9.7. Professor Bailey provided an update on the upgrade to the Observatory's Lightning Protection systems which was carried out in December 2013 and January 2014. The lightning protection of the main building is now significantly improved and extends to include the Library building and telescope domes. Work is due to commence in late January to replace the Fire Detection and Alarm system. This project, which is being managed by the Department of Finance and Personnel, Properties Division together with Mrs Kennedy, is expected to take approximately 8 weeks to complete.

- Committee Membership

9.8. The Chair thanked Mr Donnelly and Mrs Wilson for their contribution over the period of their membership of the Committee, which had been extended to 30 April 2014.

10. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 5 June 2014 at 11.30** in the Cassini Room, Armagh Planetarium.

The meeting ended at 14.45.

Signed as a true record of the Meeting

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(Chair)

Dated:

Action Point Log of the Management Committee of Armagh Observatory and Planetarium

Reference	Action	Owner	Progress
MC18/10/13-01	Explore informal co-operation with the Armagh Public Library at the next Library Sub-Committee meeting	Professor Hibbert and Mrs Wilson	Ongoing 23 Jan 2014: Meeting scheduled for late November had to be postponed.
MC18/10/13-02	Revised Business Plan to be drafted for consideration by DCAL by 30 November.	Professor Bailey, Dr Mason & Mrs Kennedy	Ongoing 23 Jan 2014: Meeting took place with DCAL on 15 January to discuss first draft of 2014/15 Business Plan
MC18/10/13-03	Key issues for discussion to be highlighted in the Directors' Interim Reports at future meetings.	Professor Bailey, Dr Mason & Mrs Kennedy	Completed
MC18/10/13-04	Clarification to be sought from DCAL on co-option of members to the Management Committee by end November 2013	Professor Bailey	Completed
MC18/10/13-05	Directors to define the future direction of their respective organization and develop a plan to achieve this by end of December 2013	Professor Bailey & Dr Mason	Ongoing 23 Jan 2014: Strategic Planning meeting held on 4 December. Elements to be incorporated into Business Plans for 2014/15.
MC18/10/13-06	Arrange the Strategy Sub-Committee workshop by mid-November	Mrs Kennedy	Completed: Workshop took place on 4 December 2013
MC18/10/13-07	Propose members of a Scientific Review Team independent reviewers of the Strategic Plan by end December	Strategy Sub-Committee	Ongoing
MC18/10/13-08	RTE Junior channel to be approached by end of December 2013 about making a children's television programme on astronomy in the Planetarium	Dr Mason	Ongoing 23 Jan 2014: Dr Mason is exploring the potential for this.

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MC18/10/13-09	DCAL Guidance for completion of Arm's Length Body Assurance Statements to be shared with members of the Management Committee by mid-November	Mrs Kennedy	Completed: Shared with papers for January 2014 meeting
MC18/10/13-10	Criteria for membership of ARAC to be shared with the Chairman	Mr Hannam	Completed: Details sent to Chair 6 Jan 2014
MC18/10/13-11	Chairman to consider the request for new nominations to ARAC	Chair	Ongoing 23 Jan 2014: This can only be resolved when the criteria for membership has been considered by the Chair.