

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM COUNCIL

**Minutes of the 180<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the NAM Council from 1400-16.30hrs on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February 2023 in the boardroom at the NAM Chelsea**

**Present**

Lieutenant General Sir Simon Mayall (Chair), Lieutenant General Sir George Norton (Deputy Chair), Mrs Sabine Vandenbroucke, Mr Guy Perricone, Mrs Judith Donovan, Dr Paul Schreier, Mr Timothy Cooke, Professor Ali Ansari, Ms Sue Mackenzie, Lord Andrew Roberts Professor Jonathan Boff.

**In Attendance**

Brigadier (ret'd) Justin Maciejewski (Director, National Army Museum), Mr Mike O'Connor (Deputy Director NAM), Ms Brenda Hobday (Honorary Marketing Advisor), Mr Richard Hughes (Honorary Legal Advisor), Mr Mike Robbins (Army Chief Accountant), Brigadier Alex Potts (Chief of Staff, Regional Command), Mr Christopher Horner (Chair, Members Advisory Group), Dr Nicole Hartwell (Item 1 only, NAM Fellow), Ms Lizzy Sutherland (Clerk to Council, Minutes).

**Item 1. Dr Nicole Hartwell Presentation**

Members were delighted to meet Dr Hartwell, who shared academic highlights and future outputs which included her upcoming book *Victorian Visions of War and Empire*.

**Item 2. Council Administration**

**Item 2.1 Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed Mr Christopher Horner, Chair of the Members Advisory Group (MAG), to his first Council meeting.

Council bid a fond farewell to Ms Brenda Hobday at her last meeting and thanked her for all her contributions over the past seven years as NAM's Honorary Marketing Advisor.

**Item 2.2 Register of Members' Interests**

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

**Item 2.3 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from HRH the Duke of Kent.

**Item 2.4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

The minutes were approved as a true record.

The completed action tracker was noted.

**Items 3. Director's Update**

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The Director reported on the gallery refresh which was on schedule and on budget. The *Conflict in Europe* gallery will to the public on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023. The Duke of Kent will formally open the gallery on 6<sup>th</sup> April. Council and Patrons had been invited to the preview event on 5<sup>th</sup> April.

Footfall was growing and the Museum saw 5 busy weekends in a row. Members were content to see real green shoots coming through on visitor numbers. A Member commended the numbers which were ahead of the benchmark for London.

The Shop will be refreshed this year.

Recruitment was in a good place with eight new members of staff including some from Regimental Museums and four Army Reservists now on NAM staff.

The NAM had published histories of every Army Regiment and Corps online with a link to their website. Members anticipated web footfall would continue to grow.

### **Item 5. Business Plan**

The Chair commended the Director and his team on a comprehensive Business Plan.

The Director had agonised over the level of staff turnover last year, so the Business Plan was built from the bottom up this year. Everyone was included in the plan, and it was quite granular. Staff performance reviews will be based on these objectives to drive ownership. The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Team Leaders will go on a two-day Away Day in May to work on the Strategy.

Visitor feedback had been tracked and reflected in the Business Plan e.g., warming up the Café with visuals and brightening up the corridors to Playbase with colour.

The “democracy of the dead” was discussed, and the Chair urged “empathy with history” be added to the plan.

Council was encouraged by the Business Plan and approved it.

### **Item 6. Council Performance Review & Skills Matrix**

Mrs Vandenbroucke reported on the results of the Council performance review, which were compiled by adding the scores rather than creating average to see the range of answers more transparently. Overall, the results were positive and consistent, but the usual tension was apparent; how involved should Trustees get? Apart from the ‘policing’ function, was there a positive feeling of support? Members discussed getting the balance right between policy and support, which worked on both sides.

In response to a member’s query the Director confirmed the age range of Trustees will be widened by new Members who join later this year.

There were a couple of areas in the skills matrix where scores were lower, but the Enterprise Committee had two excellent external advisors on board.

A Member highlighted that two of the five committees were chaired by women, which should be trumpeted as it challenged bias.

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Members found the exercise useful and collectively felt a degree of satisfaction. It was agreed to monitor performance.

### **Item 7. Updates from Sub-Committees & NAMTL Board**

#### **Item 7.1 Research Development**

The Research Development Chair briefed Council on highlights.

The fundraising vacancy had been a struggle to recruit for, but new areas to source potential candidates were discussed in detail.

The Committee was considering extending Dr Hartwell's Fellowship by a year due to the disruption caused by the pandemic at the start of her course.

#### **Item 7.2 Enterprise Committee/NAMTL Board**

The Enterprise Committee/NAMTL Board Chair reported on a positive first meeting with a segmented agenda.

The NAMTL Directors had been very helpful, and one had reviewed NAM's event proposition.

The Head of Communications & Campaigns reported on the very encouraging brand awareness campaign. The contract with the media buyer will be reviewed next year.

Catering saw a profit for the first time in three years. Council congratulated the Museum and thanked the Sponsor for their support.

#### **Item 7.3 Performance, Audit & Risk Assurance**

The Performance, Audit & Risk Assurance Committee (PA&RA) reviewed a long list of NAM's policies and thought it would be good from a governance point of view to add review dates to the list. A matrix of which committees will oversee what policies was produced. PA&RA will review the Health & Safety and Safeguarding policies.

The internal auditor's Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the next meeting.

#### **Item 7.4 Collections & Research**

The Chair of the Collections & Research (C&R) Committee had no major concerns other than dwindling Committee membership. It was agreed Tim Cooke, Prof Ali Ansari and Chris Horner would join this committee.

The Committee discussed the decision to move 'research' to the Development Committee but agreed Collections also had to maintain a research element, and Council agreed.

The Deputy Chair enjoyed his recent trip to Stevenage and found team morale to be high.

On the research side there were three things to highlight; plans to showcase the Dawn of Waterloo; the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the American war of independence and the fact that the Museum now had the skillset to take forward international research programmes.

Digital delivery of collections was progressing nicely.

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Acquisition highlights included the horse furniture of General Sir John Mostyn, 1760 (c), and a rare dog collar from 'Cheales' Royal Fusiliers, 1900 (c). There was some excitement about the potential loan of a bust of Mary Seacole later this year.

### **Item 7.5 Appointments & People**

The Director spoke of the importance of people in this organisation. This Committee which will now meet twice a year, will give more support to Human Resources and allow for a systematic approach to debating HR matters. New Member Mr Neil Johnson will join this Committee when appointed later this year. Brigadier Alex Potts suggested the Sponsor be involved in this Committee too.

Council approved the updated Terms of Reference for the Appointments & People Committee.

A 'Pulse Survey' had been introduced and will be emailed to staff every four weeks to get a sense of the mood and morale in the Museum.

### **Item 8. Finance Summaries to 31 December 2022**

The Deputy Director reported the NAM was in a good position going forward. The PA&RA Committee was satisfied, and no issues were raised.

Council was content with the financial summaries.

### **Item 9. Health & Safety Report**

There were no issues to report.

### **Item 10. Any Other Business**

#### **Item 10.1 Net Zero**

Mrs Vandenbroucke collated the responses received and found scores to be wide ranging. There were high scores on leadership and ownership but weaker results on strategy and measurement, which was expected as measurements were all new. There was good reporting on waste streams and energy usage. The NAM was fortunate to be in a new building, but a light exercise could be done to show improvements made in the last ten years. There were other initiatives that made financial sense and provided an easier way of working such as moving documents to the Cloud. Council agreed a lot was being done and the NAM should communicate better about its green credentials.

The Chief of Staff, Regional Command, suggested Council went paperless as a signal that the organisation was taking sustainability seriously.

There was no other business the Chair closed the meeting.