

## NATIONAL ARMY MUSEUM COUNCIL

### Minutes of the 181<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the NAM Council at 10:00hrs - 12:30hrs on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June 2023 in the Boardroom at the NAM Chelsea

#### **Present**

Lieutenant General Sir Simon Mayall (Chair), Lieutenant General Sir George Norton (Deputy Chair), Mr Tim Cooke, Mrs Sabine Vandenbroucke, Mr Guy Perricone, Mrs Judith Donovan, Lord Roberts of Belgravia, Prof Jonathan Boff, Mr Neil Johnson, Prof Ali Ansari.

#### **In Attendance**

Brigadier Justin Maciejewski (Director, National Army Museum), Mr Mike O'Connor (Deputy Director NAM), Miss Lizzy Sutherland (Clerk to Council, NAM, Minutes), Mr Mike Robbins Army Chief Accountant, Brigadier Alex Potts (Chief of Staff, Regional Command), Mr Chris Horner (Chair, Members Advisory Group).

#### **Item 1. Council Administration**

##### **Item 1.1 Chairman's Opening Remarks**

The Chair welcomed Mr Neil Johnson, a new Army Board approved Member to Council.

##### **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, Ms Sue Mackenzie and Mr Paul Davies.

##### **Item 1.4 Minutes of the Previous Meeting & Matters Arising**

The minutes were approved as a true record and the action tracker was noted.

#### **Items 2. Director's Update**

The Director presented slides on strategy. Footfall was recovering but it was a long road ahead. Q1 of this year saw a busy Easter with 80% of pre-Covid visitor numbers. May saw a dip in numbers due to the Coronation and the hot weather. The world had changed since 2019 with inflation, strikes and changes in work and leisure patterns. Weekends tended to be quiet as families sought local leisure options over a day out in London. International tourism had been hit by VAT on shopping. Discretionary spend was being squeezed. There were some headwinds, but the Director was confident about reaching the target next year.

The refurbished *Conflict in Europe* gallery recently re-opened and the *Dawn of Waterloo* painting was unveiled by HRH the Duke of Kent.

The Museum was now in the top five results when searching for any regiment online. It had been a five-year project. Council commended the team.

The Director reported on NAM strategy and emerging strategic themes were discussed. The four added lines of development, including the Chelsea Heritage Quarter and the Sandhurst partnership, were now beginning to come to life, and strategic partnerships will be one of the big themes in the next five years.

The tri-service museums review was in full swing. The MOD fully supported and valued the NAM, and hoped the Museum would do more for regimental museums, do more internationally, and explore back office synergies with other intuitions like the Royal Hospital Chelsea. Overall, it was a positive meeting.

### **Item 3. Updates from Sub-Committees & NAMTL Board**

#### **Item 3.1 Development**

NAM's Postdoctoral Fellow Dr Eamonn O'Keeffe had been awarded the André Corvisier Prize by the International Commission for Military History.

#### **Item 3.2 Enterprise/NAMTL**

Overall NAMTL was performing well. A new independent financial advisor was welcomed; Ms Angela Marshall, who will replace Mr Robin Grimston from November 2023 on the PA&RA and Enterprise Committee/NAMTL Board.

#### **Item 3.3 Performance, Audit & Risk Assurance**

The Committee reviewed the internal audit.

The Environmental Report was discussed, the team were enthusiastic and measurements were in hand.

#### **Item 3.4 People & Appointments**

This Committee now meets twice a year and covers all human resources matters, providing a good forum to discuss issues and best practice ideas. Monthly 'Pulse' surveys were much more effective at monitoring staff engagement.

#### **Item 3.5 Collections & Research**

The Committee considered upcoming acquisitions and disposals.

### **Item 4 Finance Summaries to 31 March 2023**

The Deputy Director reported the NAM was in a relatively good financial position based on budgets and projected spend profiles for the last FY.

### **Item 5. Health & Safety Report**

The report was taken as read. The Deputy Director confirmed that PlayBase will be updated later in the year.

### **Item 6. Council Housekeeping**

#### **Item 6.1 Tenures**

The Director presented slides to update Council on membership. Prof Boff kindly agreed to stay on until November 2023. The shortlisting of applicants for the Historian vacancy on Council will follow directly after this meeting, with the hope of interviewing in July.

### **Item 7 Any Other Business**

This was the final Council meeting for the Head of Arms and Services, Home Command, and Council passed on their collective thanks.

The Chelsea History Festival (September 26 – 1 October this year) will launch in early July. The Chair will host a reception for Council, stakeholders and Patrons on 28 September.

There was no other business and the Chair closed the meeting.