

**MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF THE ARMAGH OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2017 AT 10.45 A.M. IN THE CASSINI ROOM, PLANETARIUM**

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

**Apologies:** Professor M Merrifield, Mrs P Wilson, Mr P McGurgan, Professor M Mathioudakis, Professor G Doyle

**In attendance:** Professor M Burton (AOP Director), Mrs A Stafford (Organisational Change Joint Project Manager), Mrs D Neill (Operations Manager)

**1. APOLOGIES**

Apologies were recorded as above.

**2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest.

**3. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2016**

The minutes of the meeting of 6 October 2016 were reviewed, approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

**4. CHAIR'S BUSINESS**

The Chair advised that Committee that Professor Hibbert had indicated that he would be moving to live in England, probably by the summer, and had therefore tendered to the Board of Governors his resignation from the Board and Management Committee within that timeframe. On behalf of the Committee the Chair thanked Professor Hibbert for all the work he has done and wished him well for his future move.

The Chair welcomed Mrs Stafford to the meeting.

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

The Committee noted the matters arising.

**6. UPDATE FROM THE AUDIT AND RISK ASSURANCE COMMITTEE (ARAC)**

6.1 Mr Hannam provided an update from the preceding Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC). The main focus of the ARAC was the report provided by the Group Fraud Investigation Service (GFIS) into the actions of the former Director Dr Tom Mason. In summary, the report found that the Director had evaded controls on expenditure, failed to declare matters to ARAC and did not follow procedures in relation to the credit card. No criminality was found.

6.2 Internal Audit will be working with Professor Burton to create an action plan to address issues arising from this. The ARAC will review the action plan and provide assurance to the Management Committee on this in due course. **Action Point MC 18/01/17-01 ARAC to review AOP Audit Action Plan and provide assurance to the Management Committee.**

6.3 The Northern Ireland Audit Office (NIAO) can complete its work on the external audit on the accounts for 2014/15 and 2015/16. The 2014/15 accounts will be clear as expenditure referred to in the report took place in 2015/16. The Department for Communities (DfC) deemed the expenditure irregular and as a result the accounts will be qualified. There will be a report attached to the accounts which will make substantial reference to the investigation. The former Director will have an opportunity to respond to criticisms by the NIAO.

6.4 Mr Hannam advised that the ARAC had considered the audit plan for the coming year. They had also reviewed the implementation of previous audit recommendations and the risk register.

6.5 Professor Hibbert advised that the GFIS investigation had been instigated in October 2015. The report was provided to the Department (DfC) in October 2016 and received by Armagh Observatory and Planetarium in December 2016.

6.6 Professor Oudmaijer queried the status of the contracts entered into by the former Director. Mr Hannam explained that these had been discharged. They were deemed irregular as no authorization had been sought from the Department (DfC).

## **7 UPDATES ON ARMAGH OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM (AOP) ACTIVITIES**

7.1 Professor Burton explained that the Corporate Plan session would commence shortly. The Committee was asked to review the two draft plans – the Science Plan and the Education and Outreach Plan - and invited to provide comments to Professor Burton.

7.2 Professor Burton advised on progress in relation to the appointment of the Senior Management Team (SMT). Applications have been received for the Head of Corporate Services post. The other two posts have not yet been advertised as AOP awaits approval to proceed.

7.3 Professor Burton updated the Committee on activities and operational matters.

7.4 Finally, Professor Burton updated the Committee in relation to the meeting the previous day between himself, Archbishop Clarke, Professor Hibbert and Deputy Permanent Secretary Ian Maye. The meeting was constructive and it was hoped that approval for the two SMT posts would be forthcoming.

7.5 In response to Professor Ray's query about ICT development, Professor Burton advised that a temporary IT person started on Monday. AOP has, however, had to withdraw from a planned ICT review by consultants due to time constraints. Professors Burton and Jeffery have begun drafting an ICT vision and will continue to develop this. The IT system has been tested with an enforced shut down from Northern Ireland Electricity and all systems were restored. An updated accounting system has been implemented.

7.6 The Chair, on behalf of the Committee expressed appreciation to Professor Burton for his work.

7.7 The Committee noted and approved the Risk Register.

7.8 The Committee noted the amendments to the bank signatories.

## 8 MANAGEMENT STATEMENT and FINANCIAL MEMORANDUM (MSFM)

Professor Burton advised the Committee that AOP has suggested a capitalization amount of £1500. Mr Brown and Professor Harra considered this a reasonable level.

Professor Hibbert proposed that the draft document be reviewed by the Committee with comments forwarded to Mrs Neill by the end of February. Mrs Neill will forward a word version to enable tracked changes. The document will be reviewed at the next Management Committee meeting. **Action Point MC 18/01/2017 – 02 Mrs Neill to forward word version of MSFM for Committee to review and return tracked changes by end of February. Professor Hibbert to review comments and present second draft to March Management Committee.**

## 9 AOP TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR)

Professor Hibbert explained this was amended to reflect the Minister's decision not to remunerate the Chair of Management Committee.

## 10. AOB

### 10.1 Dates of future meetings

29<sup>th</sup> March 2017  
and  
9<sup>th</sup> June 2017

### 10.2 The Committee noted the Training and Development dates available.

The meeting finished at 11.40

Signed as a true record of the Meeting

.....  
*Richard Amaghi*

(Chair)

Dated: 29/03/17.

**Annex 1 Updated Actions as at 18 January 2017**

Reference	Action	Owner	Progress
MC29/01/15 - 01	Dr McKay to explore within ESA if exhibits could be provided to the Planetarium	Dr McKay	<p><b>Ongoing</b>  <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.  <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>  <b>16 May 2016:</b> The Organisational Change Project Board is considering these  <b>28 January 2016:</b> The Organisational Change Project Board is considering these.  <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>  <b>16 January 2017:</b> Final revised documents to be present to Management Committee in January 2017  <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.  <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.  <b>28 January 2016:</b> The Organisational Change Project Board is considering new governance arrangements.  <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>  <b>16 January 2017</b> AOP requested update on progress  <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.  <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.  <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  <b>28 January 2016:</b> Ongoing discussions with the solicitor and Atlas Communications about the production of maps to accompany the lease.  <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 - 03	Dr Vink to continue discussions with Eircom UK with regards to exploring their proposal in more detail.	Professor Burton	<b>Ongoing</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
MC08/06/16-06	Access to Queen's University's journals to be investigated'	Professor Hibbert	<b>Ongoing</b> <b>December 2016:</b> Applications for visiting academics have been submitted to Queens for consideration <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.
MC 06/10/16-01	Discussion on research review to be an Agenda item at a future MC meeting	Professor Burton	
MC 06/10/16-02	Science Vision to be presented at January meeting	Professor Burton	<b>Ongoing</b> Draft distributed on 18 January 2017
MC 06/10/16-03	MC to seek final approval and adoption of governance documents from the AOP Board of Governors including the approval of a remunerated chair	Mrs Hogg	<b>Ongoing</b> Final revised documents presented at Management Committee 18 January 2017
MC 06/10/16-04	Corporate Strategy to be discussed at January MC meeting	Professor Burton	<b>Ongoing</b> Process initiated. Corporate Planning Event scheduled for 18 January 2017
MC 06/10/16-01	Formal note of thanks to be issued to Mr Hughes	Mrs Neill	