*ROYAL BOTANIC GARDEN EDINBURGH BOARD OF TRUSTEES*

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Trustees**

**held in the David Douglas Room, John Hope Gateway,**

**Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh (RBGE)**

**on Friday 8 December 2017 at 1000**

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| **Present:** | Sir Muir Russell  Prof Beverley Glover Dr David Hamilton Mrs Patricia Henton Prof Thomas Meagher Ms Diana Murray Prof Ian Wall  Mr Chris Wallace Mr Robert Wilson | Chairman of Trustees Trustee  Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee Trustee |
| **In Attendance:** | Mr Simon Milne  Prof Pete Hollingsworth Mrs Heather Jackson Mr Kevin Reid | Regius Keeper Director of Science Director of Enterprise  Director of Horticulture and Learning |
|  | Mr Graham Hill Ms Sara Griffiths Mr Gerry Gallagher | Arcadis (Item 6 only)  Head of Estates (Item 6 only)  Project Manager, Estates (Item 6 only) |
| **Apologies:** | Ms Ann Robertson | Head of Finance |

| **NO** | **ITEMS** | **ACTION** |
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|  | **PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION ON THE STRATEGY FOR COMMUNICATIONS**  Ms Paula Bushell (Head of Marketing and Communications) and Ms Shauna Hay (Press and Marketing Manager) gave a presentation to the Board of Trustees prior to the main Board of Trustees’ meeting. They outlined current work that aimed to strengthen RBGE’s reputation through the effective communication of the organisation’s scientific, horticultural and educational programmes and accomplishments, and to meet income targets. Examples of recent communication achievements were highlighted, and Trustees were updated on the new website and conclusions from visitor surveys. The Board of Trustees noted the progress to date and emphasised the need for ambition and strong strategic focus if the desired step change in RBGE’s profile was to be achieved. Also highlighted was the importance of developing the communication interface between the Marketing and Communications Team and the Science Division and the need to ensure that key messages were communicated through all RBGE activities. The Regius Keeper would discuss the Trustees’ comments with the Senior Management Team and with the new Director of Enterprise and Communications, when appointed, to further the aim of achieving a significant increase in RBGE’s profile. |  |
|  | **PRIVATE MEETING**  The Board of Trustees and the Regius Keeper held a Private Meeting prior to the Main Board meeting. |  |
|  | **OPENING ITEMS:** |  |
| **1.0** | **Trustees’ Conflict of Interest**  No conflicts of interest were reported. |  |
| **2.0**  2.1  2.2 | **Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on Wednesday 11 October 2017**  The Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 11 October 2017 were accepted as a true record of the meeting.  **Decision.** It was agreed that:  The PA to the Regius Keeper would place a copy of the approved Minutes in the Library, on the General Drive, the RBGE Website and circulate by e-mail to the Board of Trustees. | PA to the Regius Keeper |
| **3.0**  3.1  3.2  3.3 | **Matters Arising**  Arts Advisory Group  The Regius Keeper reported that he was working with Mr Robert Wilson (Chairman of the Arts Advisory Group) to finalise a list of potential members who would be invited to join the Arts Advisory Group. The aim was to send out letters of invitation before Christmas 2017 and to hold the first meeting in February 2018.  RBGE Medal  The Chairman had written to Sir Peter Hutchison and would write to Dr Rai advising them that the Board of Trustees would like to award them the RBGE Medal. Dr Rai had recently been appointed Director General of the Department of Plant Resources in the Ministry of Forests and Soil Conservation in Nepal.  Property Asset Management Plan  The Regius Keeper and Mr Ian Wall had met to consider the Property Asset Management Plan. Actions arising from that meeting related to the further development of a carbon management plan, refining the five year Capital Plan, and undertaking a further and more detailed space audit were being taken forward by the RBGE Estates department. |  |
| 3.4  3.5  3.5.1 | RBGE Ethical Policy/Investment Fund  Following the presentation at the previous meeting by Adam and Co, Dr David Hamilton and Mr Ian Wall had considered how best to review the RBGE’s investment requirements. It was agreed that future investments should be aligned with the RBGE’s Mission. The next stage would be to identify potential Investment Managers and invite them to demonstrate their credentials in meeting the requirement for ethical investment, and then undertake a selection process. Some minor amendments would be made to the Brief for Investment Managers and the Botanics Foundation would not be included in the process as it was an independent body.  **Decision.** It was agreed that:  RBGE Ethical Policy/Investment Fund  The Botanics Foundation would not be included in the brief for the investment manager. The Head of Finance would work with Dr David Hamilton to undertake an Investment Manager selection process. | Head of Finance |
| **4.0** | **Chairman’s Report**  There was nothing further to report. |  |
| **5.0**  5.1 | **Regius Keeper’s Report**  The Regius Keeper presented his report and highlighted:   * A Fluid Grading Exercise would be undertaken in the New Year. * The RBGE’s request for HRH The Duke of Rothesay to extend his royal patronage was being considered. * The 350th Anniversary was discussed with HRH’s office and his input would be considered. * Approx 50,000 tickets for Christmas at the Botanics had been sold but one night had to be cancelled due to adverse weather conditions. * Recent and impending staff changes/recruitment and adjustments to the staff structure.   **Decision.** It was agreed that:  The Regius Keeper would provide the Board of Trustees with the revised RBGE staff structure. | Regius Keeper |
|  | **DISCUSSION ITEMS:** |  |
| **6.0**  6.1  6.2 | **North East Corner (NEC) Project Update and Discussion with Graham Hill (Arcadis)**  Mr Graham Hill presented a paper which showed information on the NEC Project Benefits Realisation, the anticipated funding release forecast by Project, and the Project Organisational Chart. RBGE would be informed on  14 December 2017 of the Scottish Government’s budget decisions for 2018/19 including any allocation to advance the NEC Project Stage D. If funding was forthcoming it was agreed that an RBGE NEC Programme Coordinator would be appointed. It was noted that guidance would be required on the composition of the planning package, with a decision to be taken by the Board of Trustees. It was also noted that whilst using the same architect would be cost and time effective choosing a new architect was possible.  **Decision.** It was agreed that:  The Regius Keeper would inform the Board of Trustees if funding was to be forthcoming from the Scottish Government to advance the NEC Project and that NEC would remain a standing item on the Board of Trustees’ Agenda for future meetings. | Regius Keeper |
| **7.0** | **Budget Planning for 2018/2019**  The Scottish Government would announce their Budget for 2018/19 on Thursday 14 December 2017 and the RBGE’s settlement would then be known. Forecast Budget scenarios had been prepared for the Trustees consideration. |  |
|  | **INFORMATION ITEMS:** |  |
| **8.0**  8.1  8.2 | **Finance Update and Finance Report for the Period to 30 October 2017**  The forecast for 2017/18 was for a balanced Budget. It was proposed that in the future only one Finance Paper would be required to be presented to the Board of Trustees.  **Decision.** It was agreed that:  The Head of Finance would only prepare one Finance Paper for the Board of Trustees for future meeting. | Head of Finance |
| **9.0** | **Project Updates**  The Regius Keeper reported that the current Glasshouse safety works should be completed by March 2018. |  |
| **10.0** | **Report of the Audit Committee**  The Chairman of the Audit Committee reported that there were no major issues, they had received a comprehensive and reassuring presentation on maintenance and had recommended that a ‘dashboard’ of metrics relating to the maintenance programme be presented to the Audit Committee twice a year. |  |
| **11.0** | **Report of the Science Advisory Committee**  The Chairman of the Science Advisory Committee reported that a meeting had been held on Thursday 7 December 2017 with all attendees. They had reviewed scientific publications with RBGE citations and were impressed with the high profile. They had received a presentation on the Colombian Programme from James Richardson (Tropical Botanist). They had held a session on Science Strategy Planning which focussed on RBGE’s scientific identity. They considered synergy projects which identified large challenging cross cutting areas across the science programme. |  |
| **12.0** | **Report of the Botanics Foundation**  The Regius Keeper reported that a Director of Development would be recruited and an appointment made in the New Year. |  |
| **13.0** | **Update on 350th Anniversary Celebrations**  The Director of Horticulture and Learning reported that a 350th Anniversary Coordinator would be appointed in the New Year and would report to the new Director of Enterprise and Communications. Prof Tom Meagher would represent the Trustees in the 350th Planning Group. It was noted that Logan Botanic Garden would celebrate 50 years in 2019 and this would be included in the programme. |  |
| **14.0** | **Risk Register – Review of Red Risks**  Following discussions at the Board of Trustees Strategy Meeting on Wednesday 11 October the Risk Register had been published. Updates on mitigations for Red Risks were noted. |  |
|  | **CLOSING ITEMS:** |  |
| **15.0**  15.1  15.2 | **Any Other Business**  Honour  The Chairman, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, congratulated Mrs Patricia Henton who had received her MBE for services to the Environment and Professional Education.  Director of Enterprise  The Director of Enterprise would leave the RBGE on Friday 22 December 2017 following nine years of service. The Chairman, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, thanked her for all her commitment and contribution to the success of RBGE and wished her well for her new role at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens. |  |
| **16.0** | **Arrangements for the Next Meeting**  The next meeting would be held on Wednesday 28 February 2017 in the David Douglas Room, John Hope Gateway, Arboretum Place, Edinburgh EH3 5NZ. |  |

**Jennifer Martin**

PA to the Regius Keeper

14 December 2017