

MINUTES OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE OF ARMAGH OBSERVATORY AND PLANETARIUM HELD ON 21 JUNE 2021 AT 11.00 AM

Present: Mr J Briggs (Chair), Mr S Brown, Mr G Cox, Dr M Darnley, Professor L Harra, Dr C Jackman, Mr P Kennedy, Dr K Lemon, Professor M Mathioudakis, Mr E Rooney and Mr R Wilson

In Attendance: Professor M Burton (Director), Mrs C Corvan (Head of Corporate Services), Dr M Sarzi (Head of Research), Ms K Moylan (Boardroom Apprentice) and Mrs L Brown (Corporate Manager)

Apologies: Mr P McGurgan and Mr L Knox (Head of Finance)

1. OPENING REMARKS

- 1.1 At the outset the Chair welcomed everyone to the virtual meeting, extending a special welcome to new Member, Mr Greg Cox, Board of Governors nominee. Mr Cox thanked the Chair.
- 1.2 The Chair also advised that it was Ms Kim Moylan's last meeting as Boardroom Apprentice. He hoped that she had enjoyed the process and her experience would be of benefit for the future. In response, Ms Moylan thanked the Management Committee, adding that it had been a great learning opportunity and a great Board to have been part of.

2. APOLOGIES

- 2.1 Apologies were recorded as above.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

- 3.1 The Chair reminded members and officers of the need to declare any actual, potential or perceived conflict of interest associated with any item on the Agenda either now or at the relevant point during the meeting.

Mr Wilson joined the meeting at this juncture.

- 3.2 Via the meeting chat facility Mr Wilson apologised for his late arrival, declared an interest in Mullinure Lands and undertook to withdraw from the meeting as appropriate.
- 3.3 The Committee noted letter dated 29 April 2021 from Tracy Meharg, Permanent Secretary regarding Conflict of Interest Arrangements, which had previously been circulated.

4. MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 15 MARCH 2021

- 4.1 The minutes of the meeting of 15 March 2021 were reviewed and approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

5. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 5 MAY 2021

- 5.1 The minutes of the special meeting of 5 May 2021 were reviewed and approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

6. MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18 MAY 2021

- 6.1 The Chair reported that Mr Rooney had suggested the following minor amendments, which he was happy to accept:

Paragraph 6.13 – addition of the words ‘the frequency of’ before the words ‘periodic review’;
Paragraph 7.7 – rewording of the penultimate sentence to ‘He wondered if point 2 should be amended to say that there would be a periodic review by DfC/MAG and address any issues identified rather than have reviews only with reference to adherence with the reports’.

- 6.2 The minutes of the special meeting of 18 May 2021 were reviewed and approved as a true and accurate record of the meeting, subject to the amendments outlined above, to be signed by the Chair at a later date.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 7.1 There were 16 matters arising from previous meetings. It was proposed to close 12 of these and 4 remained ongoing.
- 7.2 There were no further matters arising.

8. CHAIR’S BUSINESS

- 8.1 The Terms of Reference for the Management Committee, ARAC, SPRC and draft REAC had been previously circulated.
- 8.2 The Chair reported that the Terms of Reference for the Management Committee had been approved by the Board of Governors on 19 May, at which the Board also approved the recording of meetings. Recording of the Board of Governors meeting had commenced immediately, mid-meeting.
- 8.3 Mrs Corvan advised that the Terms of Reference for both ARAC and SPRC had been discussed at each of the Committees. There was a small typo within the ARAC to change the frequency of review from every 5 years to every 3 years. In addition, a number of small inconsistencies had been identified and it was proposed to read across all of the Terms of Reference again to address these. There was nothing that would change any of the relevant rules or guidance. **Action MC 21/06/21-1 Amendment to be made to ARAC ToR and MC, ARAC and SPRC ToR to be read across for consistency.**
- 8.4 The draft Terms of Reference for the REAC would be brought back in September, when the Committee had had an opportunity to formally consider them.
- 8.5 Mr Rooney explained that he had noticed some inconsistencies across the Terms of Reference in regard to the section on Evaluation and Review and in particular in relation to how they were reviewed and performance evaluated, which he thought the Management Committee would want to be common. Mrs Corvan advised that the REAC wasn’t keen on an annual effectiveness review which was why it had been removed from the draft Terms of Reference. Mr Rooney pointed out that the review was to review the effectiveness of the Committee. Mrs Corvan suggested that the REAC be afforded

the opportunity to consider the matter at its meeting and Professor Burton supported this suggestion, pointing out that the Committee had not yet met and adding that the REAC would work in a different way and was an academic-based Committee. The Chair considered it right and proper for the REAC to review its own Terms of Reference in the first instance. **Action MC 21/06/21-2 REAC to review its own Terms of Reference, including the review of effectiveness of the Committee, and that the ToR be brought to the Management Committee in September.**

8.6 The Committee noted that AOP would be introduced to the incoming Boardroom Apprentice, Mr Jason Murray, at a Virtual event on Wednesday 24 June.

8.7 The Chair reported that Professor Mathioudakis' first term on the Management Committee was due to expire on 10 November 2021. Discussions would take place with QUB and Professor Mathioudakis regarding continuing membership for a second term. **Action MC 21/06/21-3 Continuing Membership of Management Committee for Professor Mathioudakis' Membership to be progressed.**

8.8 Committee Membership as outlined below was approved:

ARAC Mr Brown (Chair), Professor Harra, Mr McGurgan, Mr Kennedy and Mr Rooney
SPRC Mr Rooney (Chair), Mr Briggs, Mr Brown, Dr Lemon and Mr Kennedy
REAC Professor Harra (Chair), Dr Darnley, Dr Lemon and Professor Mathioudakis

8.9 The Chair reported that Ms Sammy Leslie had been offered and accepted a position on the Board of Governors.

8.10 An update on Mullinure Lands and Armagh Leisure Village was deferred until the end of the meeting, to facilitate the conflict of interest declared by Mr Wilson.

8.11 The Committee noted the following diary dates:

- Monday 28 June – Familiarisation Tour for New Members
- Monday 20 September – proposed Engagement Event and Launch of new Strategy. This was the date of the next Management Committee and, if possible Members were asked to pencil in the full day.

8.12 In response to a query from Dr Jackman, Mrs Corvan briefly outlined the proposed itinerary for Monday 20 September, confirming that it would be appreciated if Members could plan to be in Armagh, subject to extant restrictions at that time. Professor Harra referred to travel and quarantine requirements and queried if a hybrid approach could be adopted.

9. REPORT FROM DIRECTOR

9.1 Professor Burton guided the Committee through his report, elaborating briefly on the matters contained within it which included an update on AOP operations; Head of Research Report; Mullinure Lands; Stakeholder Engagement; Staff Appointments, Achievements and Activities and 2021/22 Business Plan and Budget.

9.2 In terms of the AOP Operations, the Committee noted that:

- AOP was now operating in a hybrid mode;
- the Planetarium remained closed to the public but was due to open on Saturday 26 June, a successful 'soft launch' having taken place on Saturday 19 June;
- the new Exhibition was complete;

- the Digistar software for the planetarium projects had been upgraded to Digistar 7;
- new and replacement dome shows had been completed in-house;
- there had been two notable scientific publications since the last Management Committee meeting relating to the formation of massive black holes from massive stars and the observations of an interstellar visitor to our Solar System (Comet 2I/Borisov);
- AOP had participated in two weather-related public events and had received a number of requests for meteorological data;
- work to provide a public interface to the new collections management system continued and the library database had been included within the CMS;
- AOP's expression of interest to be involved in the UN climate change conference (COP 26) had been selected for further exploration;
- it was intended to make an application to have the Astropark designated an 'Urban Night Sky Place' by the International Dark Sky Association;
- a new 5-year strategy for 2021-26 had been developed;
- a report on skills gaps within AOP was included with the papers.

9.3 In terms of Mullinure lands, the Committee noted the urgent need for a Project Manager resource in order to fully engage in a collaborative process.

9.4 Professor Burton reported on the following Staff Appointments and Achievements since his Report had been written which included:

- the appointment of Dr Laura Scott as a postdoctoral fellow on the STFC grant working with Simon Jeffrey;
- the election of three AOP Astronomers as IAU Vice-Presidents of Commissions:
 - Simon Jeffrey Commission G5 Stellar and Planetary Atmospheres
 - Stefano Bagnulo Commission B6 Astronomical Photometry and Polarimetry
 - Michael Burton Commission C4 World Heritage and Astronomy

Each Astronomer would serve 3 years as Vice-President, 3 years as President and 3 years as an Advisor. Jorick Vink and Apostolos Christou were continuing to serve on Commissions G2 and F1, and Michael Burton would serve as the Advisor to Division B (Facilities, Technologies, Data Science) resulting in 5 of the 7 Astronomers in representative roles for AOP.

9.5 The Committee also noted that capital funding allocation for 2021/22 had increased to £436,000 to include the Data Visualisation Laboratory, Dome Shows and Feasibility Study for the Grounds.

9.6 In response to a query from Ms Moylan about having the weather data available on OpenDataNI, Professor Burton advised that AOP's data was publicly available on its own website, a project that had been on-going over the past year or so. If researchers wanted to use the data he would prefer they accessed it through AOP so that it could be explained and understood. For the purposes of a school project everything needed was readily available from the website.

9.7 The Head of Research's Report, which had been included within the Director's Report, provided updates in respect of AOP's REF-like Research Excellence Report; 2021 PhD Recruitment; Leverhulme Early-Career Fellowship and other Leverhulme grants; Dr Sander's Öpik Fellowship and STFC Grants. Dr Sarzi drew attention to the resignation of Dr Sander; the paper proposing the establishment of a donation fund to support AOP's PhD student programme and the draft letter to the Leverhulme Trust Committee regarding grant eligibility.

9.8 In response to queries from Professor Mathioudakis regarding the Öpik Fellowship Dr Sarzi advised that the recruitment deadline was Friday 6 August and the post was for 3 years. Professor Burton also confirmed that the post was included within AOP's core funding. Using the chat facility Dr Jackman enquired if the post had been advertised on social media and the astrocommunity mailing list and in

response Dr Sarzi advised that it had been advertised on the AAS Job Register and the Astronomical Society forum but not yet on social media. Dr Jackman undertook to provide Dr Sarzi with contact details for mailing lists.

9.9 By way of background and for the benefit of new members, Dr Sarzi explained that following on from the Mock-Ref exercise in 2014, AOP had decided to have another REF-like Research Excellence Review as close as possible to the REF 2021 guidelines, with some exceptions in relation to the timeframe; acceptance of AOP's open access repository and that a single impact case would be sufficient for the exercise. The Panel had comprised Professor Roger Davis, Oxford; Professor Monica Grady, OU and Professor Don Pollacco (Warwick), Chair.

9.10 There were 3 elements to the Research Excellence Framework exercise:

- Quality of Research – originality, significance and rigour of research outputs;
- Outreach and Impact Case – reach and significance of research-informed activities;
- Research Environment – how vibrant and sustainable this was.

9.11 Dr Sarzi reported that in terms of Outputs, 18 papers had been submitted of which the panel assessed 33% to be world-leading, 61% internationally excellent and 6% (1 paper) recognised internationally. The results demonstrated that the panel believed that the research carried out at AOP was internationally competitive.

9.12 In terms of Outreach and Impact, the Panel recognised the strength of the Institution in having a Planetarium facility, however the way effectiveness of the outreach programme was measured needed improvement and a better case was needed to explain how the research informed the outreach programme. Recommendations had been made as to how to address these areas. Overall, it was assessed that 40% of the outreach and public engagement activities were outstanding in terms of their reach and significance; 30% were very considerable and 30% had considerable impact.

9.13 Dr Sarzi highlighted the key observations and comments relating to the Research Environment aspect of the exercise. This included praise for the efforts and organisation of the Institution; endorsement of the vision and mission statement; concern that there were no females within permanent staff members; recognition that within PhD Students and PDRAs there was a much better gender balance; encouragement to progress towards Athena-SWAN accreditation; recognition that the source of income and funding streams was good compared to other Institutions of AOP's size; support for maintaining the level of PhD students; support for the Öpik Research Fellow initiative; congratulations for remaining operational through the pandemic and for continued Meteorological data gathering and recognition for the strength of the visitor programme. Overall, on the basis of the caveats and also that the panel missed out on meeting with personnel, the initial judgement was that 25% of the environment was conducive to producing research of world-leading quality; 50% of internationally excellent quality and 25% of internationally recognised quality.

9.14 The report highlighted the need to put the results in context with the rest of the REF2021 exercise; strongly recommended AOP work to improve the gender balance amongst staff; commended AOP for implementing many of the recommendations of the previous REF exercise; supported the introduction of the Öpik Fellowship; praised efforts to maintain the number of PDRAs and PhD Students and recommended that AOP diversify its outreach work.

9.15 Dr Sarzi reported that, contrary to one of the recommendation of the previous REF2014 that AOP enter the official REF2021, the Panel did not feel that this could be a straight-forward decision and suggested an alternative approach. He felt this was something for the Research and Education Advisory Committee to discuss.

- 9.16 The Chair thanked Dr Sarzi adding that it was very useful for the Management Committee to hear such a strong report. He agreed that the detail needed to be discussed at the REAC and looked forward to this in due course. Any recommendations would be brought back to the Management Committee. **Action MC 21/06/21-4 REF-like Research Excellence Report to be considered by REAC.**
- 9.17 Mr Cox referred to the opening event the previous Saturday, which he considered had been a really impressive event as were the facilities. From speaking to colleagues on site he said it was plain that they had worked incredibly hard to get ready for it and he felt that the Management Committee should pass on its thanks. **Action MC 21/06/21-5 Management Committee's appreciation and thanks to those involved in preparations for re-opening of the Planetarium to be conveyed to personnel.**
- 9.18 In response to a query from Mr Cox regarding the need for a Communications and PR programme, Mrs Corvan reported that AOP had just appointed a new PR company for the next 3 years. With the previous Company there had been a lot of success on the research side and getting more mainstream PR in relation to international significance. She added that she had taken note of the IAU appointments referred to early in the meeting and hoped to get some PR around that. She said AOP recognised that this was a really important area. Mr Cox said it would be useful to be able to see details of PR coverage at future meetings or within the Papers. **Action MC 21/06/21-6 Information on PR coverage to be included in Papers for future Management Committee meetings.**
- 9.19 Mr Cox advised that if the Leverhulme Trust issues required further development he would be willing to contribute to that, from a legal perspective.
- 9.20 With regards to Mr Cox's comment regarding PR, Dr Sarzi reported that, coming from a University environment, the PR company was really adding value and there was also the possibility of training.
- 9.21 Dr Lemon referred to the National Co-ordinating Centre for Public Engagement (NCCPE), an organisation aimed at public engagement for the higher education research sector, funded by UKRI, which had a lot of resources for training, engagement and how to demonstrate impact. She said they also had an Impact Development Programme. Dr Sarzi confirmed that he was aware of the NCCPE and stressed that even if AOP didn't aim to submit for the next REF, it needed to carry out a future REF-equivalent exercise, abiding as much as possible to the REF Guidelines. Keeping a research informed programme in the Planetarium and strong evaluation would require investment and resources.
- 9.22 Dr Sarzi welcomed the opportunity to have an Addendum to the report when the REF came out as, the newly completed exhibition provided a strong example of research informed outreach.
- 9.23 In response to queries from Professor Mathioudakis regarding the Donations Scheme and the potential for large donors, Mrs Corvan briefly explained the existing restrictions on donation income which at present couldn't be built up over a number of years and had to be netted off funding from the Department. AOP had sought permission from the Department to use donations to build up a fund, over a number of years, for PhD students. It was hoped more donations would be made if AOP was able to indicate that they funded PhD students. When the conditions were right to enable AOP to build up a fund it would then look at ways of promoting it to encourage donations going forward.
- 9.24 In terms of large donors, Dr Sarzi commented that given the current restrictions there was no desire to generate significant income. He referred to the success of universities in securing donations and philanthropists and enquired of Professor Mathioudakis if QUB could provide assistance to AOP in this regard. In response, Professor Mathioudakis advised that in the University, this went through the Alumni, as a grant with conditions having been defined with the Donor.
- 9.25 Professor Burton reported that there was an Accountability Meeting the following day and the matter was on the Agenda. He said it was very important for AOP to be able to accept and retain donations.

- 9.26 In response to a query from Ms Moylan regarding a sponsorship programme, Mrs Corvan confirmed that under the current rules this was not permissible.
- 9.27 The Chair thanked Professor Burton and Dr Sarzi for their updates and the Committee approved the Director's report.

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

- 10.1 Mr Brown informed the Committee that ARAC had considered and noted the report on the External Quality Assessment of Internal Audit Services and the Internal Audit Charter 2021.
- 10.2 The Internal Audit report on the Review of Income had been satisfactory with no recommendations and the Status of Outstanding Internal Audit Recommendations, assessed by Management, indicated that 2 of the 4 recommendations had been completed and the remaining two, reliant upon external parties, were being progressed.
- 10.3 ARAC had considered the updated Risk Register which included an increase from high to extreme in respect of the financial risk due to projected budget deficit in 2021/22 and lack of resources for effective engagement on future development opportunities and an increase from high to extreme in respect of the heritage assets following a condition assessment of AOP historic telescopes. The Committee recommended the Risk Register to the Management Committee for approval. It had also agreed that in the future there should be more targeted dates for actions.
- 10.4 The Committee had considered a report on Cyber Essentials; there was nothing to report from the Northern Ireland Audit Office and the draft Annual Report and Accounts 2020/21 had been reviewed.
- 10.5 ARAC had considered a paper on the review of policies undertaken and recommended the following policies to the Management Committee for approval:
- Access to Information – updated to including scale of fees
 - Conflicts of Interest – no material changes
 - Risk Management – no material changes
- 10.6 The Whistleblowing Policy had been withdrawn, for further review.
- 10.7 Mr Brown advised that the Committee had considered a paper proposing an increase to Delegated Limits, which in particular recommended:
- an increase in the Directors' limit from £10k to £50k
 - increases for some other staff members
- 10.8 The Committee recommended the proposed increases for Management Committee approval.
- 10.9 The Financial Policies and Procedures had been updated to include general review of expenditure policy and procedure, including the increased delegated limits previously reported and the Committee recommended this for Management Committee approval.
- 10.10 The Chair thanked Mr Brown for his report and the Management Committee approved the Risk Register as of 8 June 2021; the Access to Information Policy; the proposed Increase in Delegated Limits and the amendments to the Financial Policy and Procedures.

11. UPDATE FROM THE STAFFING POLICY AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE (SPRC)

11.1 Mr Rooney advised that the main issue the SPRC had considered was the Skills Gaps and Options Paper. He explained that the document set out some gaps in skills and resources that existed, primarily due to budgetary issues, which were also quite central on the Risk Register at present, and the ways that AOP had met requirements in the short term through innovative and creative methods of obtaining funding and using its resources. The paper also highlighted the issues going forward and how posts and resources would be required to deliver an ambitious Corporate Plan for the next 5 years and so was an important issue for AOP. He said there was a need to consider how the skills and posts needed and the funding and sources of funding that would be required could come together to deliver on the ambitions and vision for AOP.

Professor Mathioudakis retired from the meeting at 12.20 pm.

11.2 The Committee had also considered some immediate staffing needs and was content to recommend recruitment of a Corporate Policy and HR Officer (P/T permanent) and, subject to NLHF funding, a Project Manager/ Collections Officer (2 yr FTC) and Librarian (1 yr FTC).

11.3 The Chair thanked Mr Rooney for his report and the Management Committee approved:

- the recruitment of a Corporate Policy and HR Officer (P/T permanent); and, subject to funding application to National Lottery Heritage Fund
 - Project Manager/Collections Officer (2 yr FTC);
 - Librarian (1 yr FTC).
- the establishment as permanent 2 Education Officer fixed term posts.

Mr Wilson retired from the meeting at 12.25 pm.

12. PERFORMANCE AGAINST BUSINESS PLAN – KPIs

12.1 With reference to the 2020/21 Q4 KPIs Mrs Corvan briefly explained that when Covid hit approval had been granted to revise the 2020/21 targets. Visitor and Income targets had been revised in anticipation of visitors between October 2020-March 2021, however due to extension of restrictions even the revised targets had been unachievable. The visitor numbers and income achieved had only been possible due to the Christmas event as the Planetarium had only been open for 8 days during 2020/21. In addition, some original KPIs has been removed and new targets added.

12.2 Taking each KPI in turn, Mrs Corvan briefly elaborated on the end of year position. She advised that AOP had successfully pivoted during 2020/21 undertaking a lot of activities that had not initially been envisaged.

12.3 With reference to 2021/22 KPIs Mr Cox queried how much it was envisaged that activities during the incoming 12 months would be through a hybrid approach, expressing concern about setting KPIs that could not be met because of external factors. In response, Mrs Corvan explained this was difficult to manage. The 2021/22 Business Plan outlined the KPIs and Visitor and Income targets had been based on 30% capacity, re-opening on 26 June. It was hoped to be able to increase these, if restrictions allowed, however, she didn't think that AOP should legislate for another lockdown within its KPIs as they needed to be hopeful that things were moving in the right direction. She felt that the KPIs were set quite conservatively and pointed out that one of the objectives was to increase visitor numbers, over the next two years, back to pre-covid levels. AOP had benefited from TourismNI funding for marketing and was currently restricted by capacity, however, should it be possible to increase capacity then it was anticipated that visitor numbers would also increase due to staycations and new programming such as Astropark tours.

- 12.4 Mr Kennedy complimented AOP on its social media activities which he considered was a significant achievement.
- 12.5 Mr Rooney referred to the end of year resource and capital outturn for the 2020/21 financial year and queried whether AOP had come in on budget. Mrs Corvan confirmed that it was her understanding that AOP had come in on target and within the permissible parameters. There had been some tails and easements which had all been worked through with DfC.
- 12.6 The Committee approved the KPIs – Q4.

13. 2021-2026 CORPORATE PLAN FINAL DRAFT

- 13.1 At the outset, the Chair advised that it was planned to have a completed document printed for release on 20 September. He hoped that Members could agree the direction of travel and if detailed scrutiny was necessary then he considered the way forward to establish an ad hoc Committee, with delegated powers, to make changes within the general thrust and direction that the Management Committee was happy with.
- 13.2 Professor Burton explained that the original Corporate Plan completed in 2018 was about stabilising the organisation. The new strategy was about moving forward towards the Minister's vision and having the right structures in place to do so. The 4 pillars had been changed to a different format.
- 13.3 By way of background to the draft document presented, Mrs Corvan advised that there had been a significant number of meetings. AOP had worked initially with SIB Communications Department on a presentation planned for the Minister in October 2020 and this had evolved. A very long list of objectives had been grouped and condensed and they had also worked with a copy-writer who assisted in coming up with the themes. The next stage was to work with a graphic designer to present the Strategy.
- 13.4 Mrs Corvan advised that they had reviewed other strategies and documents, in particular DfC's Five Year Strategy and the Programme for Government. She acknowledged that it was different from the previous Corporate Plan in that it didn't set KPIs or targets, rather it was about outcomes. She explained why this approach had been taken, advising that the 2018-2021 Corporate Plan had included some narrow objectives which had been restrictive. The Strategy was envisaged to be an ambition document with each year's Business Plan being stepping stones towards that containing more detailed targets. She saw the document as a stakeholder engagement tool. She added that Messrs Briggs and Brown had been engaged throughout the process and recognised that Members may welcome some more targeted discussion and that this could be accommodated.
- 13.5 The Chair suggested two ways forward – either an ad hoc Committee meeting with delegated powers or individual Members provide feedback independently and the internal team have delegated powers to make appropriate changes to ensure the document was ready for September.
- 13.6 Mr Cox recognised that a lot of work had gone into the document and queried which of the two approaches would be more helpful to those who had been involved in preparing it. In response, Mrs Corvan felt that a targeted meeting at which everyone's comments could be discussed as a group would be preferable. Mr Brown agreed, adding that it would enable an agreed consensus to be achieved and Mr Kennedy concurred. Mr Cox considered it a sensible approach and, having experience in this area, offered assistance if deemed helpful.
- 13.7 Mr Rooney considered it was worth investing some time on the document, as it would be a key document for AOP, the organisation and the Board of Governors going forward. He said it would be

the public-facing element of the strategy in engaging with other stakeholders and that getting the key messages and priorities for AOP right was important. He referred to the discussion earlier regarding the skills gaps and the one-year funding issues and the need to consider how they could be aligned to ensure the strategy could be progressed and that everyone recognised what AOP would be working to deliver in the next 5 years.

- 13.8 The Committee agreed to hold an ad hoc meeting, with delegated powers, to consider the document. Potential dates would be circulated and comments in writing in advance were welcomed from anyone who was unable to attend. It may be possible to have a small number of people on site. **Action MC 21/06/21-7 Ad hoc meeting to be arranged to consider Corporate Plan.**

14. BUSINESS PLAN 2021/22 FINAL DRAFT

14.1 The Chair advised that the Board of Governors had delegated authority to the Management Committee to finalise and approve the Business Plan.

14.2 Mrs Corvan reported that the draft Plan, already submitted to DfC, had not yet been approved. It had been submitted with an £85k deficit and a resource funding bid for the pressure had also been lodged, which it was anticipated would be progressed in due course.

14.3 Members noted that at the time of submission there had been some successful capital funding, as previously reported and that capital funding had since increased to £436k. This was significantly less than previous years as a lot of work had been carried out over the past few years. All requests for capital funding had been granted.

14.4 The document was a stand-alone one-year Business Plan until the strategy for the next 5 years was launched.

14.5 Mr Rooney referred to KPI 4 contained within the Business Plan to secure £420,000 income from scientific sources and queried whether it was challenging but achievable. In response, Mrs Corvan advised that AOP had its scientific funding confirmed for the next 3 years.

14.6 In response to a query from Mr Kennedy, Mrs Corvan confirmed that a bid for £85k had been included for consideration in the June monitoring round, along with other bids. She advised that AOP had been made aware that there probably was additional COVID funding coming into the Department and so it was anticipated it would come and that DfC seemed content with the deficit being reflected in the Business Plan.

14.7 The Management Committee approved the 2021-22 Business Plan.

15. POLICY REVIEW

15.1 The Committee noted the Policy Review paper.

16. CONFIDENTIAL ITEM REMOVED

17. AOB

17.1 The Committee noted the:

- date of future meetings - Monday 20 September 2021 and Monday 6 December 2021;
- availability of training as outlined in the report;
- ARAC Minutes for March 2021 and SPRC Minutes for December 2020.

The Chair thanked Members for their attendance and participation.

The meeting concluded at 1.00 pm.

Signed as a true record of the meeting

.....
(Chair)

Dated:

MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ACTION POINT LOG
AND MATTERS ARISING

Updated Actions as at 14 June 2021

Reference	Action	Owner	Progress
Sp 18 May 2021			
SpMC18/05/21-01	Management Committee Recommendations to be presented to Board of Governors for approval as a reserved matter	MC Chair	Proposed to close 19 May 2021: Recommendations considered and approved by Board of Governors as reserved matters.
Sp 5 May 2021			
SpMC5/05/21-01	Records of all meetings and discussions associated with the ALV to be marked as confidential and redacted from published minutes	Corporate Manager	Ongoing
SpMC5/05/21-02	Special Management Committee meeting to be held on Tuesday 18 May 2021 at 11.00 am	Corporate Manager	Proposed to close 18 May 2021: Meeting took place
15 March 2021			
MC15/03/21-01	Skills and experience questionnaire to be issued for completion and return by Members for analysis	HoCS	Proposed to close June 2021: a small number of outstanding responses are being followed up.
MC15/03/21-02	Members to submit Bio and photograph for AOP Website	MC Members	Proposed to close June 2021: a small number of outstanding responses are being followed up.
MC15/03/21-03	Skills and experience analysis to inform Committee membership and Committee membership and Chairs to be confirmed at June meeting	MC Chair / HoCS	Proposed to close June 2021: Appointments to Committee on June 2021 meeting Agenda for formal approval.
MC15/03/21-04	Board of Governors' Terms of Reference to be circulated to the Management Committee	HoCS	Proposed to close 14 June 2021: circulated to Members
MC15/03/21-05	Information regarding the role and responsibilities of a Trustee to be circulated to the Management Committee	HoCS	Ongoing June 2021: legal advice sought and will be circulated in advance of September meeting.
MC15/03/21-06	Draft correspondence to Leverhulme Trust Committee to be	HoR	Proposed to close Included in Director's Report

**MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ACTION POINT LOG
AND MATTERS ARISING**

	brought to June Management Committee		
MC15/03/21-07	Additional Credit Card and increase to card and account limits to be progressed	HoF&IG	Proposed to close Additional Credit Card received and account limits increased
MC15/03/21-08	2021/22 Business Plan to be brought to June Management Committee	HoCS	Proposed to close Agenda item for June 2021 meeting.
MC15/03/21-09	Pensions Discretions Policy to be amended, provided to NILGOSC and made available to all staff	HoCS	Proposed to close Policy amended, provided to NILGOSC and available for on Staff Resources.
MC15/03/21-10	Confidential action removed	Director	
24 June 2019 and 16 December 2019			
MC24/6/19-02 & MC16/12/19	Invite Sean Barden to September Management Committee meeting	Corporate Manager	Ongoing June 2021: Propose to invite to a future meeting when Collections related Policies are brought forward. May 2020: Deferred until a physical meeting can take place. 16 December 2019: Deferred to Board of Governors Meeting 2020 10 September 2019: Deferred to December meeting due to facilitated session with Management Committee Members following September meeting
30 March 2020			
MC30/3/20-02	Explore inclusion of Observatory in Armagh Conservation Area and report back to a future meeting.	SMT	Ongoing June 2021: ongoing but no further update at present 15 March 2021: Ongoing but no further update at present June 2020: Update included in Director's Report
14 December 2020			
MC14/12/20-01	Management Committee Terms of Reference to be reviewed for consideration at March 2021 meeting.	MC Chair / HoCS	Proposed to close 19 May 2021: Proposed changed to Terms of Reference approved by Board of Governors. 15 March 2021: Summary Paper of suggested changes on Agenda for discussion, prior to consideration by the Board of Governors at its meeting in May 2021.