

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VISITATION BY THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS HELD
IN THE OBSERVATORY BOARDROOM AT 10.30 A.M. ON 19 MARCH 2010**

Present: His Grace, the Most Reverend A.E.T. Harper (Chairman), Dean P.W. Rooke, Canon C.F. Moore, Canon R.J.N. Porteus and Councillor B. Gardiner-Watson

Apologies: Dr R. Oudmaijer, Archdeacon R.G. Hoey, Canon J.W. McKegney, Canon J.N.T. Campbell and Lord Ballyedmond

In attendance: Dr T. Mason, Professor M. Bailey and Mr L. Young

Members of the Board confirmed that there were no conflicts of interest arising from the matters to be discussed at the meeting.

1. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL VISITATION OF 20 MARCH 2009

- 1.1. The minutes of the Annual Visitation of the Board of Governors of 20 March 2009 were approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chairman.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

- 2.1. There were no matters arising.

3. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

- 3.1. The Chairman informed the Board that Councillor Gardiner-Watson's term of office as the DCAL representative on the Board will end on 31 March 2010. The Chairman thanked Councillor Gardiner-Watson for his very valuable contribution to the work of the Board and the influence he has brought to bear at the most difficult of times. Councillor Gardiner-Watson thanked the Board and the Directors for their great kindness over the years and said that he had enjoyed his time with the Board immensely and was sorry to leave. A lot had been achieved over the period, particularly the completion of the refurbishment of the Planetarium.
- 3.2. The Chairman informed the Board that the response to the recent DCAL advertisement for new DCAL representatives on the Board and the Management Committee had been disappointing. The Chairman is in correspondence with the DCAL over possible changes to the criteria for the positions but these have not been agreed as yet. The criteria must be of direct use to the Observatory and Planetarium and other criteria may be needed such as experience in libraries, museums and historic archives and instruments.

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE AND INTERNAL AUDIT COMMITTEE

- 4.1. Included in the papers were the minutes of the Management Committee meetings of 26 June 2009, 6 November 2009 and 12 February 2010, the minutes of the Audit and Risk Management Committee of 22 June 2009, 20 October 2009 and 12 January 2010 and the Terms of Reference of the Audit and Risk Management Committee, which were last up-dated on 9 March 2010.
- 4.2. During discussion of the Terms of Reference of the Audit and Risk Management Committee the Chairman referred to the purpose and role of the Committee, membership and member competencies, the number of meetings, access and reporting, the responsibilities of the Committee and the evaluation of its performance. On the proposal of Dean Rooke, seconded by Canon Porteus the Terms of Reference were approved.

5. DIRECTORS' REPORTS FOR 2009/2010 AND BUSINESS PLANS FOR 2010/2011

The Armagh Observatory Interim Report for the Management Committee Meeting on 12 February 2010 and the draft Business Plan for 2010/2011 were included in the Board papers and Professor Bailey also tabled a brief summary report for 2009, the letter from DCAL with the proposed Armagh Observatory and Planetarium proposed budget allocation 2010/2011, the Memorandum of Agreement between the Armagh Public Library and the Observatory for the Joint Collection Management and Public Access Project and the updated Observatory Risk Register.

Professor Bailey referred to the following matters:

- 5.1. The Observatory's draft Annual Report for 2009 had already been circulated to the Board and the current version, tabled at the meeting, is on the Observatory website. The Report will be finalised when the statistics are completed for the calendar year 2009 and the financial year 2009/2010.
- 5.2. DCAL has provided additional £15k resource funding in 2009/2010 for the procurement of archive quality storage media and CPD survey fees.
- 5.3. Future events noted in the Interim Report to the Management Committee were: Miruna Popescu represented the Observatory at the Big Bang Fair during UK Science Week from 11 to 13 March 2010; the fifth Armagh Heritage Day organized by the Armagh Visitor Education Committee will be held on 19 May 2010 at the Navan Centre; the International Meteor Conference 2010 will be held in Armagh from 16 to 19 September 2010; the Atomic Data and Analysis Structure Conference 2010 will be held in Armagh in early October 2010; and the Robinson Lecture 2010 will be given on the evening of 18 November 2010 by Professor Chris Impey.
- 5.4. The DCAL has not as yet identified any major issues with the draft Business Plan 2010/2011 although it has not yet been approved by senior DCAL staff.
- 5.5. The Chairman referred to the Key Performance Indicators in the draft plan and congratulated staff for continuing in general to exceed the targets set. The Chairman said that the Observatory's performance in the last Research Assessment Exercise was most satisfactory. During discussion of the statistics for published scientific papers Professor Bailey said that papers to which staff contribute are included. Research in astronomy is now highly collaborative and most papers are produced in conjunction with other research staff.
- 5.6. Professor Bailey presented the Observatory's Risk Register which had been changed to a new format requested by DCAL. The funding issue had reduced because the DCAL had announced additional recurrent funding for the Observatory for 2010/2011 onwards. Other risks apart from Administrative Inflation have also been assessed as green or 'low' risk. The hoped for reduction in administrative inflation, largely imposed by government, has however not yet happened and this risk continues to pose a severe problem for the Observatory. During discussion of the Risk Register Professor Bailey said he was satisfied that reasonable steps had been taken to deal with the health and safety, access and security aspects of managing the Grade A listed main building. In respect of the increase in administrative inflation steps could be taken to reduce this by reducing the frequency of management meetings and DCAL Governance and Accountability meetings, and the intensity of scrutiny of the organization. The Chairman added that if the administrative inflation continues to grow funding for more administrative resources will be needed.
- 5.7. The Board agreed to endorse the Observatory draft Business Plan 2010/2011 and the Risk Register.
- 5.8. Professor Bailey requested that Professor John D. Landstreet be granted the status of Visiting Astronomer at Armagh Observatory. Professor Landstreet, now retired, is a world-leading scientist with strong research interests in both stellar and solar-system

MINUTES
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
19 March 2010
Page 3

astrophysics and in technical aspects of astronomical observing techniques. Professor Landstreet had already visited the Observatory for a long-term (8-month) period under funding provided by the Leverhulme Trust. On the proposal of Dean Rooke, seconded by Canon Moore this request was approved.

- 5.9. Professor Bailey presented for information the Memorandum of Agreement between the Armagh Public Library and the Observatory for the Joint Collection and Public Access Project. The purpose of the project is to improve collection management and increase public access to both the Library and Observatory archive collections. The joint project will cost £32k for the year and will be funded in the main by grants from the Pilgrim's Trust and the Northern Ireland Museums Council. During discussion of the document Councillor Gardiner-Watson said that he was pleased that the Observatory was working with other bodies and that external funding has been obtained for the project. The Board noted the agreement.
- 5.10. Professor Bailey referred to the Research Advisory Committee which was created following the 2003-2004 Armagh Observatory and Planetarium "Vision Exercise". Professor Bailey requested that Dr Oudmaijer, Professor Dyson's replacement on the Board, be nominated to act as Chair of this Committee if he continues as a member of the Board and is willing to do so. On the proposal of Canon Porteus, seconded by Dean Rooke this request was approved.
- 5.11. The Chairman informed the Board that one of the three Board positions appointed by the Board was vacant. The Chairman asked the Directors to provide their nominations for this position.

The Armagh Planetarium Annual Report, draft Business Plan and Budget 2010/2011 and Marketing Plan 2010/2011 were in the Board papers. Dr Mason also tabled the Planetarium Risk Register.

Dr Mason referred to the following matters:

- 5.12. The Planetarium Risk Register had been revised to the new colour-coded DCAL format. The six risks identified were regarded as green or low risk. The Planetarium funding for 2010/2011 may be under pressure if the equal pay compensatory award has to be paid. Legal advice on this matter is awaited.
- 5.13. DCAL/DFP advice is awaited on whether an allowance can be paid to those Planetarium staff who currently benefit from subsidised staff pension contributions to allow them to pay the full NILGOSC staff pension contribution.
- 5.14. The DCAL wish the Planetarium to measure its performance against targets set as part of the evaluation of the Planetarium prior to the buildings refurbishment project. In particular the DCAL wish to measure Planetarium performance against visitor numbers of 60,000 per annum and recovering at least 50% of recurrent costs from non-DCAL funds which were targets arising from this evaluation. The targets set in the Business Plan 2010/2011 for visitor numbers and income represent a realistic assessment of what is achievable in the year given the changes in economic and other circumstances in Northern Ireland since the time of the evaluation. The evaluation targets have been included in the Business Plan as aspirational targets the Planetarium will work to achieve over time.
- 5.15. The Armagh Planetarium Annual Report provides the Board with details of on-site and outreach educational activities, staffing and theatre matters.
- 5.16. The Planetarium is experimenting with cloud computing and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter. A Teacher Tube site has been set up to provide short video clips for teachers to use in class. These mobile communication devices will increase the Planetarium's on-line profile and assist with the marketing of the Planetarium's educational services.
- 5.17. Details of the Planetarium's IYA 2009 activities are included in the Report.

MINUTES
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
19 March 2010
Page 4

- 5.18. Following a review by the Education and Training Inspectorate a new range of educational services has been developed for schoolchildren of all ages. These include new shows linked to quizzes in the Theatre and interactive workshops.
- 5.19. The Planetarium is currently working with the DCAL statistician on how best to obtain information from visitors.
- 5.20. New displays which included the summer Star Wars display, the Apollo display and the Meteorite display have been very well received.
- 5.21. Dr Mason in presenting the draft Planetarium Business Plan 2010/2011 referred to the following matters:
- (i) visitor numbers for 2009/2010 are expected to reach 42,000 with a very busy last 2 months in the year, which is very pleasing. Visitor satisfaction ratings are currently between 80% and 88%. DCAL expect the Planetarium to strive for rating of between 90% and 95%;
 - (ii) the seven targets set in the evaluation of the Planetarium prior to the buildings refurbishment project have largely been achieved apart from the targets of 60,000 visitor numbers and recovering at least 50% of recurrent costs.
 - (iii) the Key Performance Indicators for 2010/2011 are shown in the draft plan. In order to achieve these targets the Planetarium will seek to become further involved in teacher training partnerships, develop video conferencing links, market the educational services through the Marketing Plan, continue to quality assess the educational services, develop the Planetarium's local, European and worldwide collaborative links and progress the Planetarium's involvement in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programme.
 - (iv) details of the financial plan for 2010/2011, which show a balanced budget position, are included in the draft plan.
- 5.22. The replacement/upgrade of the projection system will be a key element of planning over the next five years. At present sufficient arrangements are in hand to deal with any break down but replacement/upgrade will be required in the near future.
- 5.23. After further discussion, on the proposal of Councillor Bill Gardiner-Watson, seconded by Dean Rooke, the Planetarium draft Business Plan 2010/2011 was adopted.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 6.1. The Board agreed that Dr Oudmaijer be appointed as a Governor for a further term of five years commencing on 1 April 2010.

7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

- 7.1. The Secretary will arrange the next meeting and notify Board members.

The meeting ended at 12.30 pm

Signed as a true record of the Meeting

.....
His Grace, The Most Reverend A E T Harper OBE BA
Chairman of the Board of Governors

Date 18 March 2011