

Board of Trustees

Minutes

- Date: 15 March 2018 (240 meeting)
Time: 14.00-16.30
Venue: Boardroom, The Victoria and Albert Museum
- Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE (Chair) Professor Lynda Nead
Mark Damazer CBE Dame Theresa Sackler
Ben Elliot Mark Sebba
Professor Margot Finn Dr Paul Thompson
Robert Glick Edmund de Waal OBE
Andrew Hochhauser QC Nigel Webb
Nick Hoffman Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board*)
- In attendance: Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
David Bickle, Director of Design, Exhibitions & FuturePlan
Dr Antonia Boström, Acting Director of Collections and Keeper of SMCG
Sophie Brendel, Director of Marketing & Communications
Heather Francis, Director of Finance & Resources
Jane Lawson, Director of Development
Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial & Digital Development
Julia Downer, Directorate Office Manager & Governance Officer (minutes)
Anna Jackson, Keeper Asian Department, for item 9
- Apologies: Steven Murphy, Caroline Silver, Sir John Sorrell

1. **Welcome and Declarations of Interests**

- 1.1 Nicholas Coleridge (NC) welcomed Trustees to the meeting and noted the apologies.
- 1.2 The following declarations of interest were recorded in relation to V&A East:
- Robert Glick is a Trustee of Sadler's Wells
 - Andrew Hochhauser is a Governor of the University of the Arts London
 - Margot Finn is an employee of UCL

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting**

- 2.1 The minutes for the previous meeting, held on 1 February 2018, were approved by the Board.

3. **Matters arising**

- 3.1 Action points from the previous meeting were reviewed:
4.5 Trustees had been provided with an overview of the Museum's interaction with communities across the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea. This will be followed up at the next Board meeting.

Action: Update on the V&A's Community Activities to be an agenda item at 10 May 2018 meeting.

7.5 Trustees will be briefed on the media plan for V&A Dundee at the 6 July 2018 Board meeting.

3.2 The Chair updated the Board on the search for a new V&A Trustee which is being organised through the Cabinet Office. It is hoped to attract applicants from the creative industries who have a knowledge and understanding of non-Western cultural and artistic heritage.

4. **Director's Report**

4.1 Tristram Hunt (TH) presented an overview of the key V&A activities since the previous meeting and reported on the very positive visitor numbers.

4.2 The current exhibitions are generally performing well, particularly *Winnie the Pooh: Exploring a Classic*. *Ocean Liners: Speed and Style* has opened to positive acclaim and will be the first exhibition for V&A Dundee. *Opera: Passion, Power & Politics* has closed, and TH highlighted the dynamic programme of public events which had accompanied it. *Balenciaga: Shaping Fashion* has also closed following a very successful run.

Looking ahead, tickets have gone on sale for *Frida Kahlo: Making Herself Up*, following a carefully planned social media campaign, and initial ticket sales are very encouraging.

4.3 President Macron of France and Prime Minister Theresa May visited the V&A for a reception and were welcomed by Tim Reeve (TR).

4.4 The Museum is organising a display to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the battle of Maqdala. The V&A is working closely with the Ethiopian Embassy in London on this display, and the ambassador will be speaking at the Opening Reception.

4.5 The V&A's pavilion at the Venice Architecture Biennale 2018 will feature an installation and exhibition around the recent acquisition of a section of Robin Hood Gardens. The collaboration with the Venice Biennale was instigated by the V&A's late former director Martin Roth, and a Venice Architecture Biennale Fund has been set up in his memory.

4.6 TH reported that DesignLab object loans are now in place at partner museums in Blackburn and Coventry, providing inspiration for the school projects.

4.7 Jo Norman has been appointed as the Director of the V&A Research Institute.

4.8 Trustees were updated on the V&A's apprenticeships programme which has been running for a number of years. The Museum has partnered with West London College to expand its work.

5. **V&A East update**

5.1 Tim Reeve (TR) updated Trustees on recent advances on V&A East, and in particular on good progress in developing the Agreements for Lease for both Here East and the Waterfront museum.

5.2 The architect's brief has been published for the Research and Collections Centre at Here East. An appointment is expected to be announced by early summer.

5.3 For the Waterfront building, RIBA Stage 2 sign-off has been achieved, with the building now approaching 6,700 sqm, and Stage 3 design is well underway.

5.4 TR reminded Trustees of the decant planning taking place at Blythe House, which will be the venue for the Board meeting in May when a full briefing and tour will be provided. Michael Ellis, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, visited Blythe House to be updated on the future plans for all three museums.

5.5 A summary of the Agreements for Lease for V&A East, both at Here East and at the Waterfront, had been circulated to Trustees in advance, with latter having been reviewed in detail by Andrew Hochhauser QC. The Board gave its unanimous approval for the Agreements to be executed at the

appropriate time, and gave delegated authority to the Director or Deputy Director to execute both Agreements for Lease on the terms suggested.

5.6 TR and Anthony Misquitta (General Counsel), were thanked by the Board for their work in bringing the Agreements to the point of signature.

6. Budget 2018-19 and Reserves Policy

6.1 Heather Francis (HF) presented an overview of the V&A's Reserves Policy, following a review by the Trustees' Finance Committee. The DCMS Museums Review asked institutions to consider their reserves and the V&A's reserves policy reflects this. The Reserves Policy was approved by the Board.

6.2 HF presented the 2018/19 Budget to Trustees for their comment and approval, following endorsement by the Trustees' Finance Committee on 27 February 2018 and the Trustees' Commercial Strategy Committee on 22 February 2018.

6.3 The Board approved the 2018-19 Budget and thanked HF and her team for their work.

7. Exhibition Programme 2018-19 and 2019-20

7.1 TH presented the forthcoming exhibition programme to the Trustees.

7.2 The varied programme for 2018 includes *Fashioned From Nature*, which explores the impact of the natural world on fashion, and *The Future Starts Here*, which is generating strong media interest. Anticipation for the opening of *Frida Kahlo: Making Her Self Up* is growing.

7.3 The V&A will host the Jameel Prize 5, the international award for contemporary art and design inspired by Islamic tradition, with *Videogames* opening in Autumn 2018.

7.4 TH briefed the Trustees on the exhibition programme for 2019.

8. FuturePlan Update

8.1 David Bickle (DB) provided an overview of the Museum's FuturePlan programme 2018-24, following a round of discussions at SMT, the FuturePlan Steering Group and at the Trustees' Building Strategy Committee.

8.2 Plans for the redesign of the Museum of Childhood, a key priority for this new phase, are progressing and an architect has now been appointed.

8.3 Projects which are nearing completion include the Cast Courts and the first phase of the new Photography Galleries.

8.4 The next phase of FuturePlan at South Kensington will focus on the North East Quarter, and the reinstatement of the South Courts.

8.5 DB will be leaving the museum shortly, the Trustees thanked him for his work at the V&A.

9. Overview of Asian Department

9.1 Anna Jackson (AJ) provided an overview of the wide-ranging work of the Asian Department, which encompasses a number of the world's leading collections including Asian textiles, jade and ceramics. AJ briefed the Trustees on the plans to move the Asian reserve collections from Blythe House.

9.2 The public programme of exhibitions and displays offered by the Asian Department includes international and national loans, as well as acclaimed shows such as *Fabric of India*. The department shares its expertise both in the UK, for example through the recent *Crafts of the Punjab* exhibition at the Herbert Art Gallery & Museum in Coventry, and further afield. There is an extensive digitising and cataloguing programme underway.

9.3 The Trustees thanked Anna Jackson for an excellent presentation.

10. **Chairman's Report**
- 10.1 Nicholas Coleridge (NC) congratulated the Senior Management Team on the excellent visitor figures, driven by the success of the V&A Exhibition Road Quarter and a strong exhibition programme.
11. **Development Report and Gift Acceptance Policy**
- 11.1 Robert Glick (RG) updated Trustees on the activities of the Development Department.
- 11.2 The Gift Acceptance Policy, which is reviewed annually, was presented to the Board members, who were in agreement.
12. **Reports from Committees**
- 12.1 **Trustees' Audit Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2018 had been circulated previously.
Action point: The Trustees asked for an update on GDPR at the May Board meeting
- 12.2 **Trustees' Commercial Strategy Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 22 February 2018 had been circulated previously.
- 12.3 **Trustees' Finance Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2018 had been circulated previously.
- 12.4 **Trustees' Investment Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2018 had been circulated previously.
- 12.5 **Trustees' Research Advisory Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February 2018 had been circulated previously.
- 12.6 **Trustees' Buildings Strategy Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were circulated at the meeting.
- 12.7 **Trustees' Investment Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 6 March 2018 were circulated at the meeting.
- 12.8 **Trustees' Visitor Experience Committee**
The minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2018 were circulated at the meeting.
- 12.9 **Trustees' Museum of Childhood Committee**
In Sir John Sorrell's absence, minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2018 were held over.
13. **Any Other Business**
- 13.1 There was no further business.
14. **Date of the Next Meeting**
- 14.1 The next meeting will be held on 10 May 2018 at Blythe House.

Julia Downer 15 March 2018

Signed _____
(Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman)