

Board of Trustees

MINUTES

Date: 10 May 2018 (241 meeting)
Time: 11.00-16.30
Venue: The Patricia Baines Seminar Room, Blythe House
Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE (Chair) Professor Lynda Nead
Mark Damazer CBE Dame Theresa Sackler
Ben Elliot Mark Sebba
Professor Margot Finn Sir John Sorrell
Robert Glick Dr Paul Thompson
Andrew Hochhauser QC Edmund de Waal OBE
Nick Hoffman Nigel Webb
Steven Murphy (from 13.40) Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board*)

In attendance: Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections
Sophie Brendel, Director of Marketing & Communications
Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning and National Programmes
Heather Francis, Director of Finance & Resources
Jane Lawson, Director of Development
Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer
Pip Simpson, Interim Director of Design, Estate & FuturePlan
Heather Caven, Blythe House & Collections Centre Director (for briefing on Blythe House, item 4, and preceding tour of Blythe House for Trustees)
Christopher Marsden, Senior Archivist, for item 8
Julia Downer, Directorate Office Manager & Governance Officer (minutes)

Apologies: Caroline Silver
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions

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
- Sir John Sorrell is Chair of the University of the Arts London

2. Minutes of the previous meeting

2.1 The minutes for the previous meeting, held on 15 March 2018, were approved by the Board.

3. **Matters arising**

3.1 The Chair reminded the Board of recent changes to the Senior Management Team: Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning & National Programmes, and Pip Simpson, Interim Director of Design, Estate & FuturePlan, were welcomed to the meeting.

Dr Antonia Boström has been appointed as Director of Collections.

4. **Blythe House Project**

4.1 Prior to the meeting the Trustees and Senior Management Team toured Blythe House, to view work on the decant project, and to meet staff and volunteers.

4.2 The tour was preceded by a briefing from Heather Caven (HC), Blythe House & Collections Centre Director, on the Blythe House decant planning. Following confirmation by Government in 2015 that Blythe House was to be sold, the V&A, Science Museum and British Museum have been working together to plan for the relocation of their collections to new facilities by 2023.

4.3 HC is managing the decant of the V&A's collections to the new Collections Centre at Here East, with the project providing the opportunity to carry out a comprehensive audit of V&A objects currently stored at Blythe House, allowing them to be condition checked, photographed and digitally recorded. In time this will considerably improve public access to the museum's collections, both physically and digitally.

4.4 HC demonstrated that preparatory work for the decant is well underway, in consultation with curatorial colleagues, and the removal of objects will start in 2021. The decant mapping strategies employed will ensure that objects are transferred to the correct spaces.

4.5 The Blythe House decant team will work closely with the architects and designers at Here East.

4.6 HC was thanked for her detailed presentation by the Trustees.

Steven Murphy joined the meeting at 13.40.

5. **Director's Report**

5.1 Tristram Hunt (TH) presented an overview of the key V&A activities since the previous meeting, and reported on the very positive visitor numbers achieved during 2017-18.

5.2 The museum is delighted that HRH the Duchess of Cambridge has agreed to become Royal Patron.

5.3 **Update on the V&A's activities in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea.**

A report had been circulated to Trustees providing an update on the work of the museum in the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea, specifically the activities of the V&A's North Kensington Community Fund. The Fund has enabled the museum to support Latimer Community Art Therapy, which provides assistance to the community following the Grenfell Tower fire. This long-term project is being co-ordinated through the V&A's Learning & National Programmes Division, which takes a leading role in working with local communities.

Action point: The Trustees asked to be updated regularly on the work of the North Kensington Community Fund.

Action point: The Trustees asked for a future agenda item on the activities of the Learning & National Programmes Department.

5.4 **Update on the V&A Gender Pay Gap Report**

Following a briefing to Trustees at the 1 February 2018 Board meeting, additional information had been provided to the Board which showed that the median gender pay gap was 0% whilst the mean gender pay gap was 7.1%. Whilst this compares favourably with other cultural institutions, the museum will continue to work on improvements going forward.

- 5.5 TH provided Trustees with an overview of the exhibition programme. *Winnie The Pooh: Exploring a Classic* has recently closed after a successful run; *Fashioned from Nature* opened to a strong start and will offer a wide-ranging public programme of associated events; *Ocean Liners: Style & Speed* is attracting a reasonable level of visitors, whilst anticipation is growing for *Frida Kahlo: Making Herself Up*. The display *Myth and Mortality: the fairy-tale world of Carolein Smit*, has opened.
- 5.6 The Board was updated on the announcement by the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) on 3 April that the new rules banning sales of antique ivory in the UK will contain exemptions for museums and cultural institutions. Anthony Misquitta (ALM) explained that the recommendations made by the V&A and others had been accepted by DEFRA, and will ensure that museums can add to their historic collections of ivory works of art, as well as continuing with commercial activities such as loans and touring exhibitions.
- 5.7 The opening of the Maqdala 1868 display has provided an opportunity to reflect on the V&A's Ethiopian collections. With the appointment of a specialist provenance curator, the V&A will continue discussions with other institutions.
- 5.8 The Smithsonian Institution has received formal approval from their Board of Regents to move forward with the V&A partnership agreement at V&A East. Andrew Hochhauser advised the Board that he had reviewed the agreement and was content, subject to a small number of clarifications.
- 5.9 Trustees were shown examples of objects acquired by regional museums, and other institutions, through the Arts Council England sponsored and V&A administered Purchase Grant Fund.

6. V&A Multi-Site Strategy

- 6.1 TH spoke to a paper which had been circulated to Trustees to prompt discussion as the V&A moves to a multi-site model. The V&A Gallery in Shenzhen opened in 2017, V&A Dundee will open in September 2018, two V&A East sites are planned in Stratford, in close proximity to V&A Museum of Childhood in Bethnal Green.
- 6.2 The discussion recommended an overarching strategy and philosophy, within which the identity and audience for each of the V&A's sites could sit. The implications and opportunities provided by the significant changes being planned were considered, and the Trustees welcomed the paper.

7. V&A East update

- 7.1 Tim Reeve, (TR) provided an update on progress since the previous Board meeting, with the Waterfront Agreement for Lease having been signed and key internal appointments made including the V&A East Project Director and two Client Project Managers.
- 7.2 As part of the design team appointments, and following an international design competition, the New York-based architectural practice of Diller Scofidio + Renfro has been appointed to design the Research and Collections Centre at Here East. Trustees received the appointment positively.
Action point: Diller Scofidio + Renfro to be invited to present to the Trustees in due course.
- 7.3 TR outlined the RIBA design timetable, which culminates in the planning submission in early 2019. TR also provided a summary of the status of the legal and financial agreements, with a particular focus on completion of the Agreement for Lease for Here East.
- 7.4 The Trustees welcomed the updates.

8. GDPR: progress to date and forward schedule

- 8.1 Christopher Marsden (CM), Senior Archivist, joined the meeting to brief the Board on the museum's work on GDPR, which had been reviewed at the last two meetings of the Trustees' Audit Committee,

most recently on 17 April 2018. Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions, is the SMT lead for the project, working closely with CM and Jen Penfound, Head of IT. Trustees were briefed on the background to the work being carried out on GDPR, and the recent internal audit report, which showed the museum was felt to be well prepared regarding key areas of compliance. It was acknowledged that data protection must become an increasingly important part of the work of the museum going forward. The Trustees were apprised of the risks which might reasonably be anticipated, and the data systems across all areas of the museum which have been reviewed.

8.2 Mark Sebba and Andrew Hochhauser QC were thanked for their input to this far reaching project, as were CM and Alex Stitt.

9. **Chairman's Report**

9.1 Nicholas Coleridge (NC) also welcomed the appointment of HRH The Duchess of Cambridge as Patron of the museum.

9.2 The Board was advised of the reappointments of two Trustees, Caroline Silver and Mark Sebba, both for four year terms.

10. **Development Report and Gift Acceptance Policy**

10.1 Robert Glick (RG) updated Trustees on the activities of the Development Department.

10.2 The year-end report had been shared with Trustees. RG was thanked for his work on development, as were Steven Murphy and Ben Elliot.

10.3 RG reported on the encouraging sponsorship plans for future exhibitions and the Photography Centre.

10.4 The Corporate Advisory Board and International Council had both met recently to take forward development plans.

11. **Reports from Committees**

11.1 **Trustees' Audit Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 April 2018 had been circulated previously.

11.2 **V&A Trustees' Committees Annual Reviews**

A paper had been circulated by Andrew Hochhauser and Anthony Misquitta (ALM) to Trustees. It was agreed that the performance of Trustees' sub-committees will be reviewed during 2018-19, and a report prepared for the Board.

Action point: ALM to co-ordinate the review of the Trustees' sub-committees in Autumn 2018.

11.3 **Trustees' Buildings Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2018 were circulated at the meeting.

11.3 **Trustees' V&A East Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2018 were circulated at the meeting.

11.4 **Trustees' Collections Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 March 2018 had been circulated previously.

11.5 **Trustees' Museum of Childhood Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2018 had been circulated previously.

11.6 **Trustees' Commercial Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 April 2018 had been circulated previously.

12. **Any Other Business**

12.1 Trustees asked that the museum's policy on the use of digital images should be discussed.

Action point: this will be an agenda item at the September Board meeting.

12.2 There was no further business.

13. **Date of the Next Meeting**

13.1 The next meeting will be held on Friday 6 July 2018 at South Kensington.

Julia Downer 10 May 2018

Signed _____
(Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman)