

Board of Trustees
Meeting minutes

July 2019

W&A



Board of Trustees

Minutes
VABT(19)50

Date: 5 July 2019

Time: 14.00-16.00

Venue: V&A Boardroom, South Kensington

Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE (Chairman) Dame Theresa Sackler
Jonathan Anderson Caroline Silver
David Bomford Marc St John
Dr Genevieve Davies Dr Paul Thompson
Ben Elliot Edmund de Waal OBE
Robert Glick OBE Nigel Webb
Nick Hoffman Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board
& General Counsel*)
Steven Murphy
Professor Lynda Nead

In attendance Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections
Sophie Brendel, Director of Audiences
Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning & National Programmes
Jane Ellis, Director of Finance & Resources
Jane Lawson, Director of Development
Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & FuturePlan
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions
Stuart Findlay, Security Adviser, for item 7
Jo Norman, Director of V&A Research Institute, for item 8
Kati Price, Head of Digital Media & Publishing, for item 9

Apologies: Kavita Puri
Judy Roberts, Head of HR

Minute taker: Julia Downer, Directorate Office Manager & Governance Officer

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

- 1.1 Nicholas Coleridge (NC) welcomed Trustees to the meeting.
- 1.2 Apologies had been received from Kavita Puri.
- 1.3 The following declaration of interest was noted in relation to V&A East:
 - Robert Glick is a Trustee of Sadler's Wells.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 16 May 2019, were approved by the Board.
- 2.2 As an action point from the previous meeting, recently appointed Trustees have been invited to view the sites of the Waterfront Museum and the Collection and Research Centre in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park at Stratford. In addition, all Trustees will be invited to view the Museum of Childhood in October 2019.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 The Board was reminded that the recruitment of three new V&A Trustees is underway and the advert has been posted by the Cabinet Office on the Public Appointments website. Candidates are sought from the fields of education, creative industries, and commercial/digital.
- 3.2 The Board had received the revised Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies, which had been circulated by the Cabinet Office.
- 3.3 As Robert Glick's term as a Trustee is shortly to come to an end, the Board thanked him for his contribution, particularly regarding development matters.

4. The Director's Report

- 4.1 Tristram Hunt presented an overview of key activities since the previous meeting.
- 4.2 The public programme, including *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams* and *Mary Quant*, continues to generate high visitor numbers. The museum is also offering *Food: Bigger than the Plate* a contemporary exhibition which addresses the conversation around design and sustainability.
- 4.3 The museum hosted a visit by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt Hon Jeremy Wright MP.
- 4.4 V&A Dundee was nominated for the Art Fund Museum of the Year Award.
- 4.5 The Board was briefed on the establishment of a partnership between the V&A and World of Wedgwood, which will promote and conserve the historic Wedgwood Collection at Barlaston, near Stoke-on-Trent. The Wedgwood Museum will be renamed "V&A Collection at World of Wedgwood" and a new Chief Curator will be appointed by the V&A to provide support for an enhanced public programme.

Anthony Misquitta, General Counsel, was thanked for his work around this project.

- 4.6 The Trustees received information on a range of programmes, which included the partnership with the Blackpool Museum, the Great Exhibition Road Festival, and the Applied Arts Pavilion Special Project organised in conjunction with the Venice Biennale.

4.7 The Director briefed the Board on forthcoming FuturePlan projects, including improvements to the Main Café floor and servery

4.8 **Action point:** The Trustees asked to receive a precis of visitor numbers to the museum and industry trends.

5. **V&A East**

5.1 Tim Reeve updated the Trustees on recent progress, including the East Bank ground-breaking ceremony which took place on 2 July 2019, hosted by The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan.

5.2 The Board welcomed the appointment of Lonnie Bunch III as the 14th Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution.

5.3 The Trustees were briefed on progress on the Collection and Research Centre (CRC), with planning permission now received and RIBA Stage 3 design completed on budget following some limited value engineering. A full Design Audit has been commissioned, with a positive outcome reported. Tenders for the storage system to be used at the CRC have been reviewed and are within budget. The focus of the next stage will be on RIBA Stage 3 'plus', which will look in detail at the public network design, visitor experience, materials and finishes. It was confirmed that the Stage 1 tenders have been issued, and the Board felt that the project was on course to retain the vision and the Diller, Scofidio + Renfro competition intent.

5.4 The Trustees were briefed on East Bank developments immediately surrounding the Waterfront Museum and CRC. The V&A is playing a leading role in the design of the wider public realm, including the main public square directly outside the Waterfront site. Exterior renderings of the Waterfront building were shared with the Board, which included measures to mitigate the effect of wind.

5.5 **Action Point:** The Trustees asked for the job description for the Director of V&A East to be circulated to the Board.

6. **Annual Report and Accounts 2018-2019**

6.1 The Annual Report of the Trustees' Audit Committee to the Board of Trustees, and the Annual Report and Accounts for 2018-2019, had been circulated to Trustees. The Annual Report and Accounts had been considered fully by both the Trustees' Audit and Finance Committees, and will be laid before Parliament shortly.

6.2 The Board approved the Annual Report and Accounts for 2018-19, and thanked the Director of Finance and Resources for their preparation.

Post meeting note: The Annual Report and Accounts for 2018-19 was signed by the Chair and the Director.

6.3 Revised Terms of Reference for the Trustees' Audit Committee, having been shared with the Board, were approved. It was noted that the Trustees' Audit Committee has oversight of ethical issues, and that the Committee would consult with the Board of Trustees as required.

7. Annual Security Report 2018

7.1 Stuart Findlay, Security Adviser, joined the meeting to present the Annual Security Report for 2018, which was approved by the Trustees.

7.2 The Board thanked the Security Department for their work.

8. V&A Research Institute Update

8.1 Jo Norman, Director of the V&A Research Institute (VARI), joined the meeting.

8.2 The Trustees received an overview of the history and current priorities of the VARI, which had been awarded Independent Research Organisation status in 2006, endorsing the quality of the research being conducted. The considerable breadth of research activities was presented to the Board.

8.3 The VARI oversees a range of academic activities including the MA programme, History of Design offered through a partnership between the V&A and the RCA, and Collaborative Doctorial Partnerships.

8.4 The Trustees were briefed on the grant from the Andrew W Mellon Foundation, which has had a transformative effect on projects co-ordinated by the VARI, making the collections more relevant and accessible.

8.5 Jo Norman was thanked for her presentation.

9. Digital Media at the V&A

9.1 Kati Price, Head of Digital Media & Publishing, joined the meeting to present an overview of digital media, particularly within the context of a multi-site organisation.

9.2 The Trustees were briefed on the work undertaken on digital media which has ensured that it is embedded in content, design and technology throughout the V&A. The successful relaunch of the website has brought significant increases in web traffic. As an example of the range of work undertaken by the team, all three of the Leonardo Codices in the V&A's collection have now been digitised and are generating high levels of interest.

9.3 The priorities for the next stage of work were set out for the Board, which will develop the digital content strategy required to support provision across all platforms and V&A sites, including improvements to the Search The Collections function.

9.4 The work being undertaken around the decant of the collections from Blythe House is providing an opportunity to ensure that the majority of objects have good record images.

9.5 Kati Price was thanked for her presentation

10. Annual Review

10.1 Trustees were provided with copies of the 2018 Annual Review.

Sophie Brendel introduced the Annual Review, an accessible record of the highlights of the museum's activities over the past year for audiences. The Annual Review will be launched at a press conference on 10 July, at which point the priorities for the museum during 2019-20 will also be announced.

Post meeting note: The press release was shared with Trustees.

10.2 The Trustees were briefed on a major media initiative which involves a BBC documentary series focussing on the V&A's curatorial and conservation activities. A short film was shown which provided an indication of the project. It will be announced at the Edinburgh International Television Festival in August 2019.

10.3 The project will be supported through social media and digital channels, the museum's public programme, and a new publication, *Lives of the Objects*.

10.4 The Trustees welcomed the plans for the project.

11. Chairman's Report

11.1 The Chairman reported on current initiatives within the museum.

11.2 The Trustees were updated on discussions with the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport around the planned Spending Review.

12. Development Report

12.1 Robert Glick (RG) updated Trustees on the activities of the Development Department and the status of current sponsorship and fundraising initiatives.

12.2 The Trustees were informed that V&A members now total nearly 200,000.

13. Reports from Committees

13.1 Trustees' Audit Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 June 2019 were circulated at the meeting.

13.2 Trustees' FuturePlan and V&A East Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 17 June 2019 had been circulated in advance.

13.3 Trustees' Collections Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2019 were circulated at the meeting.

13.4 **Trustees' Finance Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2019 had been circulated in advance.

13.5 **Trustees' Investment Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 June 2019 had been circulated in advance.

13.6 **Trustees' Research Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 30 May 2019 had been circulated in advance.

13.7 **Trustees' Commercial Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 June 2019 were circulated at the meeting.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 The next meeting will be held on 12 September 2019.

14.2 There was no further business.

Julia Downer
5 July 2019

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Signed
Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman