

Board of Trustees Minutes

16 May 2019

W&A



Board of Trustees

Minutes
VABT(19)32

Date: 16 May 2019

Time: 10.15-16.00

Venue: Weston Room, Clore Learning Centre, Hampton Court Palace

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

In attendance Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections
Sophie Brendel, Director of Marketing, Communications & Visitor Experience
Dr Helen Charman, Director of Learning & National Programmes
Jane Ellis, Director of Finance & Resources
Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer
Judy Roberts, Head of HR
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & FuturePlan
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions

Apologies: Ben Elliot
Jane Lawson, Director of Development

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 The following declarations of interest were noted in relation to V&A East:
 - Robert Glick is a Trustee of Sadler's Wells.
 - Kavita Puri has recorded a note regarding the BBC and East Bank.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 28 March 2019, were approved by the Board.
- 2.2 As action points from the previous meeting, Trustees received briefings on the V&A at Design Society and the Touring Exhibitions programme under item 6. of the agenda.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 The Chair welcomed David Bomford, a new Trustee, to the meeting.

4. The Director's Report

- 4.1 Tristram Hunt (TH) presented an overview of key activities since the previous meeting.
- 4.2 The public programme, including *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams* and *Mary Quant*, has been well received both in terms of press coverage and visitor numbers. The autumn exhibition, *Cars: Accelerating The Modern World*, has been launched to the press. *Videogames: design/play/disrupt* has opened at V&A Dundee.
- 4.3 A major symposium around food waste and sustainability, hosted by Ben Elliot, V&A Trustee and Food Surplus and Waste Champion, was held at the museum to coincide with the opening of the exhibition *Food: Bigger than the Plate*.
- 4.4 The William and Judith Bollinger Gallery has re-opened, very successfully energising the jewellery collection, and showcasing Queen Victoria's Coronet.

A significant gift to the museum by Sir Elton John and David Furnish has been announced, which will support the Photography Centre.
- 4.5 A further educational initiative has been launched. The V&A Innovate programme complements DesignLab Nation, by focussing on professional development for teachers and Key Stage 3 curriculum materials for schools.
- 4.6 The Trustees received a briefing on the Director's recent trip to New York and Washington, which provided opportunities to continue dialogue with the Smithsonian Institution.
- 4.7 The Director reported on the results of the 2018 V&A Gender Pay Gap, which remains unchanged from 2017 at a median gap of 0% and a mean gap of 7.1%. The Report has been published on the website. Trustees were briefed on plans to close the mean pay gap.
- 4.8 The Board discussed the current public programme, and the mechanisms used to forecast exhibition visitor numbers and to deliver exhibition programmes, particularly as the multi-site programme develops.

5. V&A East

- 5.1 Tim Reeve updated the Trustees on recent progress. The Collection and Research Centre (CRC) RIBA stage 3 has been completed; the landlord's works have finished and the V&A's

demise is complete. The Trustees received a briefing on the final storage layout for the CRC. H M Treasury has approved the Full Business Case for V&A East.

- 5.2 Planning permission has been secured for East Bank which now passes to the Greater London Authority for final agreement.
- 5.3 The programme for V&A East over the next 18 months was set out for the Board, including the recruitment of a Director for V&A East and the appointment of contractors for the CRC. As part of the programme, detailed curatorial concepts will be shared with the Trustees' FuturePlan and V&A East Committee, before being brought to the Board. The Trustees were briefed on the revised governance arrangements for V&A East.
- 5.4 The Trustees were briefed on the V&A Gallery at the Stratford Waterfront museum and the developing plans for curatorial vision and collaborative exhibitions with the Smithsonian.
- 5.5 The Trustees were reminded of the scale of the project and the confidence being shown by the stakeholders.
- 5.6 **Action Point:** The new Trustees will be invited to visit the Queen Elizabeth Park to view both V&A East sites.

6. **V&A International Update**

- 6.1 Tim Reeve briefed Trustees on the V&A's considerable range of international initiatives. With the appointment of the new Head of International Partnerships, the opportunity arises to develop an ambitious and integrated international strategy. Trustees received an overview of current activities, which include loans and exhibitions, training programmes for continuing professional development, the Culture in Crisis programme, as well as commercial initiatives such as brand licensing.
- 6.2 The museum participates in a number of international partnerships including the Venice Biennale, the Milan Triennale and the Jameel Prize.
- 6.3 Trustees received the brochure for current international touring exhibitions and were briefed on opportunities to expand the programme following the recent appointment of a new Head of Exhibitions.
- 6.4 The collaboration with Design Society in Shekou has been a successful partnership and a number of touring exhibitions will be shown. The Gallery has raised awareness of the V&A internationally and provided a platform for further work within China. It supports UK "soft power" by promoting British influence overseas.
- 6.5 The V&A's international strategy and opportunities for expanding the reach of the museum worldwide were discussed by the Trustees.

7. Spending Review and Strategic Review

- 7.1 Jane Ellis briefed the Trustees on a provisional time table for the forthcoming Comprehensive Spending Review. The Trustees were reminded that the Grant in Aid for V&A East is intended to be ring fenced.
- 7.2 The 5-year Strategic Plan for 2015-2020 was shared with Trustees, which demonstrated good progress against the objectives. The Strategic Plan 2020-2025 is being formulated by the Executive Board. The priorities and timetable were set out with the aim of bringing the Plan to the Board for approval in November 2019.

8. Collecting & Acquisitions Policy Update

- 8.1 The Trustees received a briefing from Dr Antonia Boström on the collecting priorities and policies for the curatorial departments, which reflect the implications of the forthcoming decant of the reserve collections from Blythe House, and the V&A's move to a multi-site institution.
- 8.2 The Trustees reviewed the significant acquisitions made during the period 2014-18 and discussed the sources of funding available.
- 8.3 The Trustees were shown the display cases which have been installed in the Members' Room to allow a rotation of objects acquired through Members' funds.

9. V&A Museum of Childhood

- 9.1 Gina Koutsika, recently appointed as Creative and Skills Director for the V&A Museum of Childhood, joined the meeting.
- 9.2 Helen Charman and Pip Simpson provided an overview of the current activities and visitor data for the V&A Museum of Childhood, as work continues to prepare it for the transformation into a world-leading museum of design and creativity for children, families and young people.
- 9.3 The museum has conducted extensive research into early years and child psychology to develop positive learning outcomes. The innovative designs for play and education will respond to the needs of young people today within a national and local context.
- 9.4 Through a co-design process between the V&A Museum of Childhood's audiences, curators and specialist designers, the new galleries will significantly increase the number of objects currently on display and will draw on the full scope of the V&A's collections.
- 9.5 **Action Point:** The Trustees asked to visit the V&A Museum of Childhood.

10. V&A Retail Operation

- 10.1 Sarah Sevier, Head of Retail, joined the meeting.

- 10.2 The Trustees received a briefing on the work of the V&A's retail operation. 2018-19 was a record year for retail, achieved through the careful management of the cost base at a time of rising sales. The benefits of a popular and diverse exhibition programme were reflected in strong trading numbers.
- 10.3 The main shop offers the core retail sales and has seen excellent returns since its refurbishment with good conversion rates for visitors.
- 10.4 Sarah Sevier was thanked for her presentation.

11. Chairman's Report

- 11.1 The Chairman reported on current initiatives within the museum.
- 11.2 With the recent appointments of new Trustees, the membership of the Board Sub-Committees is being revised to support the work of the museum.
- 11.3 The Chairman announced that Nick Hoffman will take on the role of Senior Trustee.
- 11.4 The Trustees were reminded that there are a number of significant projects underway for the museum, and were asked to reach out to contacts who might be interested in supporting the V&A.
- 11.5 The Chairman thanked the Board of Trustees for their commitment to the museum.

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 had received the Development Report for 2018-19 which showed that the objectives had been achieved, and in particular the Membership programme has been very successful.
- 12.3 The American Friends have made two generous gifts to the museum. At a recent meeting attended by the Director, Monica Mandelli was appointed as Chair of the American Friends.

13. Reports from Committees

13.1 Trustees' Audit Committee

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

13.2 Trustees' FuturePlan and V&A East Committee

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 May 2019 were circulated at the meeting.

14. Any Other Business

14.1 The next meeting will be held on 5 July 2019.

14.2 There was no further business.

Julia Downer
16 May 2019

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Signed
Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman