

# Board of Trustees Meeting Minutes

November 2019

W&A



## Board of Trustees

### Minutes

- Date: 28 November 2019
- Time: 14.00-16.30
- Venue: V&A Boardroom, South Kensington
- Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE (Chairman) Kavita Puri  
Dr David Bomford Caroline Silver  
Dr Genevieve Davies Marc St John  
Ben Elliot Dr Paul Thompson  
Nick Hoffman Nigel Webb  
Steven Murphy, by phone Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board & General Counsel*)  
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  
Judy Roberts, Head of HR  
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, & FuturePlan  
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions  
Claire McKeown, V&A East Project Director, for item 5.  
Catherine Ince, Chief Ince V&A East, for item 5.  
Dr Tommy Wide, Programme Manager, Smithsonian London for item 5.  
Dr Ivi Varda, Head of Membership, for item 7.
- Apologies: Jonathan Anderson, Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer
- 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 Jonathan Anderson and Tim Reeve.
- 1.3 There were no new declarations of interest.

## **2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 12 September 2019, were approved by the Board.

## **3. Matters Arising**

3.1 The Board received an update on the progress of the recruitment of new V&A Trustees.

## **4. The Director's Report**

4.1 Tristram Hunt presented an overview of key activities since the previous meeting.

4.2 The appointment of Dr Gus Casely-Hayford OBE as Director of V&A East was welcomed by the Board.

4.3 V&A Dundee celebrated the first anniversary of its opening with a lecture by architect Kengo Kuma and a series of public events. 830,000 visitors were welcomed in the first year of operation.

4.4 The Trustees were briefed on the current public programme which includes the very successful exhibitions, *Tim Walker: Wonderful Things* and *Mary Quant. Cars: Accelerating the Modern World* has opened to excellent press reviews. A new display, *Blanc de Chine: a continuous conversation*, has been installed. Three new artists-in-residence have been appointed, focussing on fashion, photography and ceramics.

4.5 The Trustees were briefed on the recent report from the Durham Commission on Creative Education which highlighted the reduction in the number of secondary school students taking creative subjects. The Board received copies of the V&A's DesignLab Nation Year 2 Report, 2018-2019. This programme sets out to support the teaching of design and technology in partnered secondary schools.

4.6 **Action point:** The Trustees asked for a future agenda item around the V&A's policy on the origins of the collection.

## **5. V&A East**

5.1 Claire McKeown, V&A East Project Director, Catherine Ince, Chief Curator V&A East, and Dr Tommy Wide, Programme Manager, Smithsonian London, joined the meeting to update the Trustees on recent progress.

5.2 The Stage 4 design work has been completed for the Waterfront building and a value engineering exercise is underway, which has been organised by the LLDC. The Trustees viewed images of the construction work underway at the Waterfront site.

5.3 The main contract for the Collection & Research Centre has been signed, while the contracts for the storage systems are being finalised.

5.5 Work is progressing on the curatorial narrative for the displays within the public network at the Collection & Research Centre.

5.6 Presentations have been organised for the Trustees' Future Plan and V&A East Committee to allow the curatorial plans to be examined in more detail.

## 6. **V&A Strategic Plan and Multisite Management**

6.1 The Trustees received a briefing on the V&A's Strategic Plan 2020-2025 which supports the mission to be world's leading museum of art, design and performance.

6.2 As the V&A evolves into a multisite institution, work is underway to support this cultural shift through a range of initiatives. The strategic direction will be set centrally but delivered collaboratively across sites to retain the V&A identity.

6.3 A further briefing will be provided for the Trustees at the March 2020 Board meeting.

6.4 The Trustees were provided with an overview of an extensive branding exercise currently underway, with a further briefing to follow in March 2020. The BBC series on the V&A: *Secrets of the Museum* will air in February 2020, on BBC2.

6.5 The work on the Strategic Plan 2020-2025 and the multisite framework was welcomed by the Board.

6.6 **Action point:** The remit of the Strategic Plan will be widened to include sustainability policy.

## 7. **V&A Membership Strategy**

7.1 Dr Ivi Varda joined the meeting to brief the Trustees on the Membership programme following a strategic review, which considered the implications of a multisite operating model on Membership.

7.2 The development of the V&A Membership programme was set out. Membership levels are running at a high level driven by the successful series of recent exhibitions including *Christian Dior: Designer of Dreams*. The income from Membership provides significant support to the work of the museum, both in terms of subscriptions and secondary sources including spending in the shops and cafes.

7.3 The strategy for engaging and retaining Members was set out for Trustees. The Membership Department will be working to engage more closely with the Members to enhance their experience through a wide range of initiatives and via investment in digital infrastructure.

7.4 The Trustees thanked Dr Varda for her presentation.

## 8. **Chairman's Report**

8.1 The Chair reported on a meeting with Sarah Healey, Permanent Secretary for the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport to provide a briefing on V&A activities.

8.2 Trustees will be invited to present at some All Staff Meetings in 2020.

## **9. Development Report**

9.1 Ben Elliot updated Trustees on the activities of the Development Department and the status of current sponsorship and fundraising initiatives.

## **10. Reports from Committees**

### **10.1 Trustees' Collections Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 September 2019 had been circulated in advance.

### **10.2 Trustees' Audit Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 had been circulated in advance.

Nick Hoffman, Chair of the Trustees' Audit Committee, provided a briefing on the outcome of the recent review of the V&A Board Sub-Committees, which had been instigated by the Audit Committee. The feedback, which was felt to be positive and helpful, will be taken forward by the Committee Chairs.

The V&A Risk Management Policy, having been reviewed by the Trustees' Audit Committee, was approved by the Board. The Risk Register is assessed on a regular basis by the Audit Committee and the Executive Board.

### **10.3 Trustees' FuturePlan and V&A East Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 26 September 2019 were circulated in advance.

The minutes of the meeting held on 13 November 2019 were circulated at the meeting.

### **10.4 Trustees' Finance Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 had been circulated in advance.

**Action Point:** The V&A Reserves Policy will be brought to the Board in March 2020.

### **10.5 Trustees' Investment Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2019 had been circulated in advance

The V&A Investment Policy, having been reviewed by the Trustees' Investment Committee, was approved by the Board.

### **10.6 Trustees' Research Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2019 had been circulated in advance.

10.7 **Trustees' Museum of Childhood Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2019 had been circulated in advance.

10.8 **Trustees' Commercial Strategy Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 had been circulated in advance

10.9 **Trustees' Visitor Experience Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 September 2019 had been circulated in advance

**11. Any Other Business**

11.1 The next meeting will be held on 29 January 2020.

11.2 There was no further business.

Julia Downer  
28 November 2019

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Signed  
Nicholas Coleridge, Chairman