



## Board of Trustees

### Minutes

Date: 02 July 2020

Time: 14.00-16.30

Venue: Via tele-conferencing

Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE, Chair  
Martin Bartle  
Allegra Berman  
Dr David Bomford  
Dr Genevieve Davies  
Ben Elliot  
Nick Hoffman  
Amanda Leveté CBE  
Steven Murphy  
Professor Lynda Nead  
Kavita Puri  
Caroline Silver  
Amanda Spielman  
Marc St John  
Dr Paul Thompson  
Nigel Webb  
Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board & General Counsel*)

In attendance Dr Tristram Hunt, Director  
Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections  
Sophie Brendel, Director of Audiences  
Dr Gus Casely-Hayford OBE, Director of V&A East  
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  
Judy Roberts, Head of HR  
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & FuturePlan  
Alex Stitt, Director of Commercial, Digital & Exhibitions  
Claire McKeown, V&A East Project Director for items 8 and 9

Apologies: Jonathan Anderson

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

#### **1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests**

- 1.1 Nicholas Coleridge chaired the meeting and welcomed Trustees to the call.
- 1.2 There were no declarations of interest in the agenda.

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

- 2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 14 May 2020, and the confidential annex relating to that meeting were approved by the Board.

### **3. Matters Arising**

- 3.1 The Board was advised that a second member of the Wilson James security staff had passed away due to Covid-19. Trustees recorded their condolences to the family of the colleague.

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

- 4.1 Tristram Hunt, Director, briefed Trustees on the activities of the museum since closure. The report had been prepared in a revised format to concentrate on the museum's response to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- 4.2 The recent statement by the Government that museums in England can reopen from 4 July was welcomed. The plans for the V&A are being finalised and will be coordinated with the other South Kensington museums and the Royal Borough of Kensington & Chelsea; the reopening date will be announced on 14 July 2020.
- 4.3 The Trustees were briefed on the response of the V&A to the Black Lives Matter movement. This has focused on public advocacy and internal change, starting with statements from the Director and Dr Gus Casely-Hayford looking at the role of museums in this context, and the establishment of an Anti-Racism Taskforce, reporting to the Executive Board, focussing on workforce, collections and programming. The work will be embedded within the V&A's Strategic Plan to ensure a sustainable programme of change.

The Trustees asked to be kept informed on the progress of the initiatives.

- 4.4 The Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport had written to the Chairman to outline government policy regarding the removal of statues or memorials with difficult or controversial histories.
- 4.5 The Board was briefed on recent appointments: Sara Kassam, Sustainability Lead; Dr Christine Checinska, Curator of African and African Diaspora Fashion; Dr Pedro Gaspar, Head of Conservation.
- 4.6 The Board received an update on Development activities which showed the impact of the current challenging environment. The Director thanked Allegra Berman for taking on role of Chair of the V&A Corporate Advisory Board.

### **5. Remobilisation Update**

- 5.1 Tim Reeve, Deputy Director, briefed the Board on the plans for reopening the South Kensington museum, which take account of specific requirements for the V&A's building, alongside guidance developed for the sector, and follows a wide-ranging consultation process. The phased reopening will focus initially on the ground floor and lower ground floor, with the Madejski Garden and Café, with the next phase seeing additional spaces opened including the exhibitions *Kimono: From Kyoto to Catwalk* and *Filthy Lucre*. The museum will be responsive to visitor demand, with capacity carefully calibrated, whilst prioritising the safety of visitors and staff. Prior to arrival, visitors will be provided with clear information to manage expectations and create a sense of anticipation.

- 5.2 The museum will offer a Covid-secure workplace for staff following a detailed review of back and front of house facilities. As the situation around the pandemic settles additional spaces may be opened up, allowing more staff back into the institution, but most staff who are not furloughed will continue to work from home for the foreseeable future.

The Covid-secure safety procedures had been reviewed by the Trustees' Audit Committee on 24 June 2020. The Committee commended the work undertaken.

## **6. Financial Report**

- 6.1 The Trustees received an overview of the Quarter 1 Forecast and an outline of possible planning scenarios for the following financial year. The position had been reviewed by the Trustees' Finance Committee on 3 June 2020. The Board commended the complex work undertaken.
- 6.2 The remainder of this item has been recorded under a Confidential Annex. Its contents are exempt from disclosure under S.(43)2 of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 because publication would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of the V&A and its supply chain.

## **7. V&A Annual Report & Accounts update**

- 7.1 Nick Hoffman, Chair of the Trustees' Audit Committee, briefed the Board on the Annual Report & Accounts 2019-20 for both the V&A and V&A Enterprises. Given the particular circumstances the Audit Committee and the museum's auditors had reviewed the situation and agreed that approval and laying of both documents will be deferred until September 2020.

## **8. V&A East Project Update**

- 8.1 Claire McKeown, V&A East Project Director, joined the meeting. The Trustees were briefed on the V&A East project with more details to be shared in September.
- 8.2 A full assessment of the COVID-related impact on the programme and budget will be conducted over the summer. Work on the site for the Collection & Resource Centre has resumed. Blythe House will reopen in July 2020 to staff working on the decant programme.

## **9. V&A East Vision, Branding & Audiences**

- 9.1 Dr Gus Casely-Hayford, Director of V&A East, briefed Trustees on the development of a curatorial vision for V&A East. It signals the origins of the V&A, the innovative creativity of Henry Cole with his focus on making and makers as the engine of transformation, whilst drawing on today's new cultural landscape to re-energise and re-calibrate the V&A's collections for new audiences, both local and from further afield through the lenses of education and creative partnerships.

Indicative proposals for the public programme were shared with the Board. The Trustees welcomed the plans which will be taken forward.

- 9.2 Sophie Brendel, Director Audiences, briefed the Trustees on the Brand and Audience Strategy for V&A East, Waterfront and the Collection and Research Centre, as well as the Museum of Childhood. With the expansion of the V&A's family of sites, a portfolio approach to the brand is being taken with an overarching Masterbrand strategy drawing on the themes of ingenuity and imagination.

The recommended names for constituent parts were shared with the Board and agreed. The audience strategy was set out in terms of potential visitor numbers and the relationship of the sites to local audiences as well as the wider community.

The Board welcomed the proposals and thanked Sophie Brendel and her team for their work. The names of the new sites will be announced publicly at a later date.

## **10. Chairman's Report**

- 10.1 On behalf of the Trustees, the Chairman commended the work of the Executive Board at this challenging time.
- 10.2 The Trustees were advised that, together with the rest of the cultural sector, the museum is awaiting information on additional support from the Government. Once this is released it will be shared with the Board. It was noted that the Comprehensive Spending Review is due to take place in Autumn 2020.

## **11. Any other business**

- 11.1 The next meeting is scheduled for 24 September 2020.
- 11.2 There was no further business.

## **12. Reports from Committees**

### **12.1 Trustees' Finance Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2020 had been circulated in advance.

### **12.2 Trustees' Investment Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2020 had been circulated in advance.

### **12.3 Trustees' Covid19 Liaison Committee**

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

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

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2020 had been circulated in advance.

Julia Downer  
2 July 2020

..... Date: .....

Signed  
Nicholas Coleridge, Chair