



Board of Trustees

Minutes

Date: 23 March 2021

Time: 14.00-16.30

Venue: Via video conference

Present: Nicholas Coleridge CBE, Chair
Martin Bartle
Allegra Berman
Dr David Bomford
Dr Genevieve Davies
Ben Elliot
Nick Hoffman
Amanda Leveté CBE

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, Commercial & Digital
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, Director of People & Change
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & Public Programmes

Apologies: Jonathan Anderson

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

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Nicholas Coleridge welcomed Trustees to the meeting.

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 28 January 2021, and the Confidential Annex relating to that meeting, were approved by the Board.

3. Matters Arising

- 3.1 The action points from the previous meeting were reviewed. At the May Board meeting the Trustees will receive briefings on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and on Technical Architecture and Digital Strategy.

4. Director's Report

- 4.1 Tristram Hunt, Director, paid tribute to Diana Heath, V&A Conservator, who died recently.
- 4.2 The Trustees received a briefing from the Director on the activities of the museum. The reopening of the museum is planned for Wednesday 19 May 2021.
- 4.3 The Trustees were advised that the UK Budget 2021 included an award of £90m of emergency funding for the national museums, and the V&A awaits confirmation of its allocation.
- 4.4 It has been announced that, alongside additional support from the Scottish Government, V&A Dundee will develop into a national role as Scotland's design museum. It will reopen to the public on Saturday 1 May in line with guidance from the Scottish Government.
- 4.5 The Director had attended the recent Contested History Roundtable convened by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. The Trustees were advised that the V&A's policy to communicate with audiences and engage in debate around the collections and its colonial histories remains unchanged. In addition the museum is committed to ongoing work around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, including setting up an Anti-Racism Taskforce.
- 4.6 An overview of the digital initiative, Explore the Collections, was shared with the Trustees. This online platform, which was two years in the making, will enable the public to search and discover information on objects in greater detail. The museum has developed the V&A's Virtual Classroom, to enable primary and secondary school teachers to access key digital resources. The work around both programmes was commended by the Trustees.
- 4.7 Despite the restrictions brought about by the Covid pandemic, the programme of Touring Exhibitions has continued, with *Kimono: Kyoto to Catwalk* opening at the Museum of World Culture in Gothenburg, *Masterpieces in Miniature: Treasures from the Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection* opening at DIVA in Antwerp, and *Mary Quant* opening at the Bendingo Art Gallery, Victoria, Australia.

4.8 Collections Division Restructuring.

This item has been recorded under a Confidential Annex. Its contents are exempt from disclosure under Ss.22, 36(2) and 43(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

5. Finance

5.1 Financial Report

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.

6. Remobilisation Update

6.1 Tim Reeve, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer, briefed the Board on plans to reopen the V&A on 19 May 2021, as part of Step 3 of the Government's 'Roadmap out of Lockdown'. The museum will open all galleries, 5 days per week and will look to gradually increase daily visitor capacity, in line with Covid safety considerations.

6.2 The museum has a strong reopening programme planned, including *Bags: Inside Out*, *Alice Curiouser and Curiouser*, *Epic Iran* and *Renaissance Watercolours*. A number of galleries have been refurbished, including the Raphael Court and the Dorothy and Michael Hintze Galleries, providing a revitalised offer for visitors. The refurbished Main Café will also reopen to visitors, and the temporary Dome Café will be removed.

6.3 Whilst it is hoped legal restrictions around visitor sites will be relaxed on 21 June under Step 4 of the Roadmap, there is a risk that future Covid-19 variants will impact the museum's operations through 2021/22, and restrictions around overseas travel both inbound and outbound are likely to remain in place in the short term.

7. Strategic Objectives & Priorities 2021-22

7.1 The Trustees received a briefing on the Strategic Objectives and Priorities, 2021-22, an interim plan reflecting the ongoing uncertainty around Covid-19 pandemic – with the next iteration of the strategic plan to be developed from Autumn 2021.

The Strategic Objectives and Priorities 2021-22 were endorsed by the Board.

8. FuturePlan Update

8.1 The Trustees received a briefing on two FuturePlan projects: the Museum of Childhood and the Photography Centre Phase 2. Trustees were reminded of the considerable scope of the projects and viewed indicative plans and designs. The projects, including budgets, had been interrogated and approved by the Trustees' Building Strategy Committee on 18 March 2021.

8.2 The proposal to move forward with both projects was approved by the Trustees.

9. V&A East Update

- 9.1 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.

10. Development

- 10.1 Jane Lawson, Director of Development, updated the Board on recent development activities.

- 10.2 The Trustees had received the Due Diligence and Gift Acceptance Policy for 2021, which had been reviewed by the Trustees' Audit Committee on 8 February 2021.

The Due Diligence and Gift Acceptance Policy for 2021 was approved by the Board.

11. Chairman's Report

- 11.1 Trustees thanked for their support, in the challenging situation.

12. Any other business

- 12.1 The next meeting is scheduled for 11 May 2021.

- 12.2 There was no further business.

13. Reports from Committees

- 13.1 **Trustees' Audit Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 08 February 2021 had been circulated in advance.

- 13.2 **Trustees Building Strategy Committee:** The minutes of the meetings held on 01 February and 18 March 2021 had been circulated in advance.

- 13.3 **Trustees' Collections Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 02 March 2021 had been circulated in advance.

- 13.4 **Trustees' Finance Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 10 March 2021 had been circulated in advance.

- 13.5 **Trustees' Museum of Childhood Committee:** The minutes of the meetings held on 26 February 2021 had been circulated in advance.

- 13.6 **Trustees' Research Committee:** The minutes of the meeting held on 11 January 2021 had been circulated in advance.

Julia Downer
23 March 2021

..... Date: 11 May 2021

Signed
Nicholas Coleridge, Chair