



Board of Trustees

Minutes

VABT(22)47

Date: 29 September 2022

Time: 14:00-16:00

Venue: V&A South Kensington, Board Room

Present: Sir Nicholas Coleridge CBE, Chair
Jonathan Anderson - joining online
Martin Bartle
Allegra Berman
Professor Polly Blakesley
Dr David Bomford
Dr Genevieve Davies
Ben Elliot
Rusty Elvidge
Nick Hoffman
Amanda Leveté CBE
Professor Lynda Nead
Kavita Puri
Amanda Spielman
Marc St John
Dr Paul Thompson
Nigel Webb
Zewditu Gebreyohanes
Anthony Misquitta (*Secretary to the Board & General Counsel*)

In attendance: Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
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
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & Public Programmes

Apologies: Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections
Judy Roberts, Director of People & Change

Minutes: Mary Witton, Directorate Office Manager

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Nicholas Coleridge welcomed Trustees to the meeting, in particular the three new Trustees who had been appointed on 5 September 2022.

1.2 The Chairman drew attention to the new Agenda format resulting from a recommendation from the recent Board Effectiveness Review.

1.3 There were no declarations of interest.

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting and matters arising

2.1 The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 7 July 2022 were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Director's Report

3.1 The Director noted with sadness the death of Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II and informed Trustees of the Museum's response and the change in title of the Museum's Patron, Catherine, Princess of Wales.

3.2 The Trustees were informed that following on from the discussion in the May meeting of the Board of Trustees, the V&A and the family of the late Dr. Mortimer D. Sackler had agreed that the V&A's Centre for Arts Education and the Exhibition Road courtyard would no longer carry the Sackler name.

3.3 The Trustees received a briefing from the Director on his activities and those of the museum over the period of July to September 2022. This included the opening of *Hallyu! The Korean Wave* to excellent reviews, the successful London Design Festival which was celebrating its 20th anniversary and media reports on restitution legislation for charitable bodies following the passage of the 2022 Charities Act. The Board noted the leading position that the Director had taken in the sector regarding restitution legislation, and awaited with interest further guidance from DCMS.

3.4 The Board discussed the implications of the current financial and energy crises and the challenges of staff hire and retention. A Staff Survey was currently being conducted and the possibility of using external consultants to review the future financial position was considered.

4. Building Strategy Committee: V&A East update

4.1 Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer, presented an update on progress at the two V&A East sites. The V&A East Museum remains on schedule to be handed over to the V&A for the fit-out stage in May 2023. The design team for the *Why We Make* galleries have been appointed. A revised programme for V&A East Storehouse, and in particular the Blythe House decant programme, has been agreed with DCMS, based on a December practical complete assumption.

- 4.2 The Blythe House decant preparations were continuing well, and on schedule for 50% of objects to be packed by the time the collection move commences, on schedule, at the end of October. Temporary storage for a small proportion of objects in the early stage of the move had been agreed with DCMS and actioned.
- 4.3 Those Trustees who had recently visited the Museum construction site noted the high quality of finish in the cladding and glazing, and the impressive volumes of the key gallery and circulation spaces.
- 4.4 The Trustees expressed their thanks to the Blythe House team for their work on preparing and packing objects for transfer, and to the Deputy Director who had lead on discussions with DCMS regarding the revised decant programme.

5. Finance Committee: Finance update

- 5.1 The Trustees received a briefing from Jane Ellis, Director of Finance and Resources, on the financial position since the last meeting, including strong retail figures, visitor numbers and GIA inflationary uplift. It was noted that the rise in the cost of living and energy prices will be felt going forwards.

6. Audit Committee: Board effectiveness update

- 6.1 Jane Ellis, Director of Finance and Resources, reported that the Audit Committee Review of the Board Effectiveness Report had noted good governance across all areas. Best practice recommendations and actions would be listed within a time-bound plan.

7. Strategic Focus items

7.1 Update on the forward exhibitions programme

Daniel Slater, Head of Exhibitions & Loans, updated the Board on the forthcoming exhibitions programme including *Donatello: Sculpting the Renaissance* (Feb to June 2023), *Divas* (Jun 2023 to April 2024) and *Chanel: Fashion Manifesto* (Sept 2023 to Feb 2024).

7.2 Brand Project update

Sophie Brendel, Director of Audiences, Commercial & Digital, updated the Board on progress on the multi-site Brand project, including the new brand identity for Young V&A (with the agency for V&A East about to be appointed) and an evaluation of the new brand campaign.

8. V&A Annual Security Report

Trustees were asked to approve the Annual Safety Report for 2021. It was noted that as a result of a safety audit in 2020, more comprehensive and accurately recorded training had been conducted for all staff in 2021. The Board received assurance on the 24-hour, multi-level security for the Museum's objects. The Board approved the Annual Safety Report for 2021.

9. Chairman's Report

- 9.1 The Chairman reported the changes to the Museum's ministerial support due to the recent change in the Conservative party leadership.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 No further business was discussed.

Signed

Date:

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Nicholas Coleridge, Chair