



Board of Trustees

Minutes

VABT(22)51

Date: 1 December 2022

Time: 14:00-16:00

Venue: Plexal, Lynn Board Room

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

In attendance: Dr Tristram Hunt, Director
Dr Antonia Boström, Director of Collections
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: Martin Bartle
Ben Elliot
Amanda Levette CBE
Dr Paul Thompson
Sophie Brendel, Director of Audiences, Commercial & Digital

Minutes: Mary Witton, Directorate Office Manager

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Nicholas Coleridge welcomed Trustees to the meeting following the tour of the V&A East Museum construction site and commended the V&A East team on the progress made and the style and quality of the building.

1.2 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 29 September 2022 were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Director's Report

3.1 The Director updated the Board on the Just Stop Oil activism currently prevalent across cultural sites in London and provided reassurance that the V&A is taking a sensible and proportionate response in terms of risk to objects, with plans in place to counter an expected continuation in levels of disruption over the coming weeks.

3.2 The Blythe House storage decant had begun on schedule in October and was operating in accordance with timelines and budgets set by DCMS.

3.3 The Art Fund symposium to launch a new report on the impact of ethnic diversity initiatives on curatorial roles took place at the V&A on 9 November. Further associated workshops and events are planned by the Museum in February.

3.4 Lord Vaizey spoke in the House of Lords in support of potential changes to the 1983 National Heritage Act. Whilst the Government had other priorities at the current time, the Museum would continue research into the history of objects in the collections and contribute to public debate on this important topic.

3.5 Upcoming acquisitions were discussed.

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, including a number of photographs showing construction progress at the Storehouse. All efforts were being made to progress completion, including use of an external independent construction consultant to monitor progress against the MCLH programme, to minimise any risks to the Blythe House vacant possession commitments to DCMS and proposed opening in 2024.

4.2 All other areas of V&A East continued to progress strongly including the very successful schools tour programme which was becoming embedded in the community in advance of the building openings.

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. Memberships remained level and further initiatives were planned to ensure growth in this area. The Q1 forecast had been over-optimistic following strong visitor numbers early in the year and the Museum had now re-forecasted in response to the Q2 results.
- 5.2 A review of Investment Management Services had resulted in a change of provider. Services would move from Partners' Capital to J P Morgan over the next few months.
- 5.3 The Board gave its approval on plans for an upgrade of the Gilbert Gallery, delivered thanks to funding support from the Gilbert Trust.

6. **Strategic focus items**

Strategic Focus: Objective 4 – Become a more effective, sustainable and inclusive organisation.

6.1 Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy (EDI)

Judy Roberts, Director of People and Change, presented the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Strategy.

6.1.1 The Board raised a query on the Governance and Accountability of the staff groups in the Museum on EDI. The Director confirmed that the groups' aims were to give insights and advice to Executive Board and to embed and uphold the Strategy set by the Trustee Board. The Executive Board values their contribution and approach.

6.1.2 The Board asked how progress and impact in EDI was currently monitored and were informed that this was via Key Performance Indicator reporting (KPIs). The second quarter KPI Report would be circulated to Trustees and methods of embedding KPIs into actions and performance considered.

6.2 Staff Survey headline results

Judy Roberts, Director of People and Change, presented the Staff Survey headlines. The Board requested further time to scrutinize the results, and it was suggested these might be considered at a Trustee Sub-Committee.

7. **Strategic Focus items**

Strategic Focus: Objective 1 – Rebuild visitor numbers and broaden how we connect with diverse audiences through integrated digital and physical experiences

7.1 Opening exhibition proposals, V&A East

The Board was presented with a proposal of the opening programme for V&A East. The Board thanked the presenter and noted the need for state-of-the-art AV to accompany the visuals of the exhibition.

8. Chairman's Report

- 8.1 The Chairman requested that Trustees attend in person at Trustee Board Meetings if possible as this contributed to the richness of discussion.
- 8.2 The Trustee Dinner to be held on Wednesday 1 February was noted.
- 8.3 The Chairman thanked Professor Lynda Nead for her major contribution to the Trustee Board and to Trustees' Collections Committee and Trustees' Research Committee. The Board wished Professor Nead well in all her future activities.

9. Any other business

- 9.1 No further business was discussed.

Signed

Date:

.....
Nicholas Coleridge, Chair