



Board of Trustees

Minutes

VABT(23)09

Date: 23 March 2023

Time: 14:00-16:30

Venue: The Boardroom, V&A South Kensington

Present: Sir Nicholas Coleridge CBE, Chair
Jonathan Anderson
Martin Bartle
Allegra Berman
Professor Polly Blakesley - online
Dr David Bomford
Ben Elliot
Rusty Elvidge
Nick Hoffman
Amanda Leveté
Kavita Puri
Amanda Spielman
Marc St John - online
Dr Paul Thompson
Nigel Webb - online first 30 minutes
Zewditu Gebreyohanes
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 and 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 - online
Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & Public Programmes
Meneesha Kellay, Senior Curator, Contemporary Programme

Apologies:

Minutes: Mary Witton, Directorate Office Manager

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Nicholas Coleridge welcomed Trustees to the meeting.

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 26 January 2023 were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Director's Report

3.1 The Director updated the Board on the activities of the Museum between 9 January and 5 March, including the high-profile acquisition of the David Bowie Archive which would be housed at V&A East Storehouse as the David Bowie Centre for the Study of Performing Arts. The Director also noted the opening of *Donatello: Sculpting the Renaissance* to strong reviews, and the *Ramadan Pavilion* in the Exhibition Road Quarter courtyard which draws on inspiration from the V&A's collections to represent the history of the mosque in Britain. It would host a series of public events and two Open Iftars as part of the annual Ramadan Festival curated by Ramadan Tent Project.

3.2 The Board discussed attendances at paid exhibitions, changing audience dynamics following the pandemic and research on long term trends in this area.

3.3 The Board discussed social media advertising and the relative advantages and disadvantages of different platforms for different audience segments. This area would continue to be researched and monitored.

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.

4.2 Practical Completion of Storehouse should be achieved in March as expected, with the beginning of the collections move following immediately. Planning work was underway for the arrival of the David Bowie Archive.

4.3 Handover of the V&A East Museum is now expected in the summer. The procurement and fit-out programmes were being re-assessed accordingly. All other work was progressing well in particular the strong content, curatorial and learning programmes being developed.

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

5. Finance Committee: Budget Approval

5.1 Jane Ellis, Director of Finance & Resources, presented the 2023/2024 budget and assumptions to the Board.

- 5.2 The Board noted the increasing visitor numbers budgeted, which nonetheless remained lower than pre-pandemic levels, despite strong exhibitions programme for the year ahead. The figures were recognised as key drivers of the important income areas of membership, retail and box office receipts and the budget assessed accordingly.
- 5.3 The Board thanked Jane Ellis for her excellent control of financial matters at the Museum.
- 5.4 The Board approved the 2023/24 Budget following its approval at Trustees' Finance Committee.
- 5.5 The Board approved the maintenance of General Reserves at £5m.
- 5.6 The Board were presented with the Gender pay gap figures which demonstrated the Museum was on target in this area.

6. Audit Committee: DCMS Framework Agreement

- 6.1 Jane Ellis, Director of Finance & Resources, presented the DCMS Framework Agreement which had been previously circulated to the Board. The Framework had been negotiated over the last two years, alongside other national museums. It was considered a strong and valuable agreement which formalised museum freedoms and where administrative responsibility resided.
- 6.2 The Framework Agreement was in the last stages of finalisation and the Board was asked to approve that the signing of the Agreement be delegated to the Trustees' Audit Committee, in order for this to be completed before the next Board.
- 6.3 The Board approved the delegation of the signing of the final DCMS Framework Agreement to the Trustees' Audit Committee.

7. Strategic Focus items

7.1 V&A Contemporary Programme

Meneesha Kellay, Senior Curator, Contemporary Programme, presented the Contemporary Programme for the Museum including *Friday Lates*, the London Design Festival, the Performance Festival and additional gallery interventions.

The Board commended the strong programme and discussed the need for data insights into the new audiences attracted to ensure ongoing engagement.

7.2 Commercial Proposal

Tim Reeve, Deputy Director & Chief Operating Officer, updated the Board on the proposed re-establishment of a free-standing commercial division at the V&A, in order to maximise commercial opportunities for the Museum in the years ahead.

8. Committee Focus

- 8.1 Continuing the focus sessions on individual Trustees' Committees of the Board, Allegra Berman, Chair of the Finance Committee and Investment Committees, presented an overview of the work and priorities of these areas.

9. Chairman's Report

- 9.1 The Chairman drew attention to forthcoming dates in the Museum calendar of exhibition and gallery openings and fundraising events.

10. Any other business

- 10.1 The Board discussed the Museum's research into terminology and the aspiration for a central resource in this area drawing on scholarship and feedback from peer institutions across the world.

Signed
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Nicholas Coleridge, Chair

Date: