



Board of Trustees

Minutes

VABT(23)26

Date: 28 September 2023

Time: 1400 - 1630

Venue: The Imagine Studio, Young V&A, Bethnal Green

Present: Sir Nicholas Coleridge CBE, Chair
Martin Bartle
Allegra Berman
Professor Polly Blakesley
Dr David Bomford
Sir Ben Elliot – via Teams
Rusty Elvidge
Amanda Leveté CBE
Kavita Puri
Amanda Spielman
Marc St John
Nigel Webb
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 and Young V&A
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 & Projects
Melissa Painter, Head of Sustainability – Item 4.2
Daniel Slater, Director of Exhibitions – Item 6
Kate Parsons, Director of Collections Care and Access – Item 7

Apologies: Jonathan Anderson
Dr Paul Thompson

Minutes: Mary Witton, Directorate Office Manager – minutes

1. Welcome and Declarations of Interests

1.1 Sir 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 7 July 2023 and the confidential annex were approved. There were no matters arising.

3. Director's Report

3.1 The Director updated the Board on key activities of the Museum between 19 June and 10 September 2023, in particular around Young V&A's opening months, the collections move to V&A East Storehouse and the overall public programme of the V&A.

3.2 *Gabrielle Chanel. Fashion Manifesto* had opened in The Sainsbury Gallery to excellent reviews in the media and was proving to be the most popular exhibition in the Museum's history in terms of advance ticket sales. The success of the exhibition was driving good visitor numbers and strong retail sales.

3.3 *DIVA* was also performing very strongly and the two fashion exhibitions were seen to be working in partnership for visitors.

3.4 The Board were informed that the revised pay offer to the Trades Unions had been accepted following a ballot of the membership and would be implemented shortly.

4. Building Strategy Committee:

4.1 V&A East Update

4.1.1 Tim Reeve, Deputy Director and Chief Operating Officer, and Dr Pip Simpson, Director of Design, Estate & Projects, updated the Board on the progress at V&A East, following practical completion at Storehouse, including snagging resolution and post-PC works.

4.1.2 Largescale architectural pieces were being installed alongside around 70,000 smaller objects relocated to date from Blythe House, around 55,000 of which were now unwrapped and housed in the new display shelving.

4.1.3 Two partner organisations had opened this month as part of East Bank, UCL East and London College of Fashion, with the public realm and shared spaces in front of the buildings now largely open to the public.

4.2 **Sustainability Plan**

Melissa Painter, Head of Sustainability, gave a presentation to the Board on the progress made against the sustainability plan and new initiatives in this area. The Board noted the benefits of current partnerships which shared knowledge, expertise and experience, and welcomed plans to reduce the V&A's carbon footprint through new ways of working. The Head of Sustainability was asked to keep detailed records of the cost implications of each initiative and how each aligns with clear scientific research in this area.

5. **Finance Committee:**

Jane Ellis, Director of Finance & Resources, presented an update on the financial position following the first half year results. The Board noted a good improvement in the second quarter with an increase in paid-exhibition visitors and strong retail figures. Memberships were growing strongly due to the success of *Chanel* and *DIVA*. In discussion the Board were informed that capacity was monitored continually to maintain visitor satisfaction levels whilst ensuring maximum access for those wanting to visit the exhibitions.

6. **Strategic Focus Item: - Inspire creative confidence in all our audiences and champion the skills needed to drive the future of the creative economy.**

Daniel Slater, Director of Exhibitions, gave a presentation on the forward exhibitions programme. The Board were also updated on measures to save on both costs and waste in all exhibition planning. In discussion, the appeal of the public programme to young audiences was considered along with the monitoring and mapping of different target audience segments visiting each exhibition.

7. **Storage Update**

The discussion under this Agenda item will be recorded under a Confidential Annex. The contents are exempt from disclosure under:

- S.36(2) of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 ("FOIA") because disclosure would inhibit the free and frank exchange of views for the purposes of deliberation; and
- S.43(2) of the FOIA because publication would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of the V&A and its staff.

8. Committee Focus: Young V&A Committee

Marc St John, Chair of the Young V&A Committee, presented an overview of the work and priorities of this Committee which had been responsible for the delivery of the transformation project from the former V&A Museum of Childhood. The successful opening, with above target visitor figures and retail receipts over the summer, supported by an exceptional media campaign, were applauded, and the whole team responsible for delivering the new concept were thanked for their input.

9. Chairman's Report

The Chairman thanked the Development team for the high standards they maintained with Patrons' dinners and events which kept the V&A as a leader in this area.

10. Any other business

10.1 The V&A Board of Trustees Terms of Reference were approved by the Board.

10.2 Noting that this was the Chair's last Board Meeting, Nigel Webb, Senior Trustee, expressed the Board's thanks to Sir Nicholas Coleridge for his service to the V&A as Chair from 2015 to 2023. His immense commitment, enthusiasm and energy had been a major contributor to the success of the Museum.

Signed 
Nigel Webb, Interim Chair

Date: 2/11/23